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The Vatican, American Catholics and the Struggle for Palestine, 1917-1958: A Study of Cold War Roman Catholic Transnationalism

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in History

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**The Vatican, American Catholics and the Struggle for Palestine,
1917-1958: A Study of Cold War Roman Catholic Transnationalism**

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Palestine)

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by

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Graduate Program in History

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
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Dr. François Laguné-Labarhet
Chair of the Thesis Examination Board

Abstract

The modern relationship between the Vatican and the state of Israel is rooted in a much deeper history of relations between Judaism and Christianity. In the main, this relationship was fraught with tensions and animosity, as early Christian writers chastised and demonized Judaism, ensconcing a hostility that endured for centuries. The advent of political Zionism in the nineteenth century renewed Roman Catholic fears of a Jewish-dominated Palestine, where religious sites sacred to Catholics would fall under the political jurisdiction of a Zionist state. In 1904, Pope Pius X granted an audience to the prominent Zionist Theodor Herzl, in which he reminded his guest that the Roman Catholic Church could never endorse or support the creation of a Jewish home in Palestine. This was to remain the essence of papal policy on Palestine for decades to come.

This study examines the relationship between the Vatican and Zionism from the Balfour Declaration (1917) to the creation of Israel in 1948, as well as Vatican attempts to constrain the nascent state in the years after its birth. More specifically, it considers the transnational nature of Roman Catholic responses to Zionism and the creation of Israel. The Vatican was supported in its anti-Zionist stance by an international network of national Catholic hierarchies, lay Catholic organizations and an active Catholic press. Leading this international Roman Catholic lobby against Zionism were the Catholic bishops of the United States. From the 1920s through the 1950s, American Catholic leaders had become crucial intermediaries in the relationship between Washington and the Vatican. Speaking as both loyal American citizens and as devout Roman Catholics,

the bishops were uniquely positioned to transmit the Vatican's policy objectives to the American government. The American bishops were also instrumental in advocating Vatican positions on Zionism at the United Nations, evidence of the importance of the American Catholic Church, and its various organs, in disseminating the positions of the Vatican to the international community.

Through an examination of a comprehensive range of primary materials, this study demonstrates that an understanding of the Vatican's relationship with Zionism and the nascent Israeli state must take into account the transnational Roman Catholic consensus on the future of Palestine, an advocacy led by American Catholics, who represented the leading edge of Vatican attempts to shape the future of Palestine.

Keywords

Christianity, Cold War, Israel, international relations, Judaism, Palestine, Roman Catholic Church, transnational history, United Nations, Zionism

This study, with much love, is dedicated to my parents, Johanne and Erminio.
I could have asked for no more.

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Abbreviations

ACPC	American Christian Palestine Committee
AJC	American Jewish Committee
AZEC	American Zionist Emergency Council
CAIP	Catholic Association for International Peace
CCA	Churches of Christ in America
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNEWA	Catholic Near East Welfare Association
DC	<i>Democrazia Cristiana</i> (Christian Democracy)
IUCW	International Union of Catholic Women
IDF	Israeli Defence Force
NCCJ	National Conference of Christians and Jews
NCCM	National Council of Catholic Men
NCCW	National Conference of Catholic Women
NCPPRM	National Committee for the Protection of Religious Rights in Mexico
NCWC	National Catholic Welfare Conference
NCNS	National Catholic News Service
PCC	Palestine Conciliation Commission
PCI	<i>Partito Comunista Italiano</i> (Italian Communist Party)
UN	United Nations
UNCIO	United Nations Conference on International Organization
UNSCOP	United Nations Special Committee on Palestine
ZOA	Zionist Organization of America

Introduction

On the morning of 30 December 1993, in the Vatican's Sala Regia, a 'Fundamental Agreement' was signed by Mgr. Claudio Celli, Vatican Assistant Secretary of State, and Yossi Beilin, Israel's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, which paved the way toward full diplomatic relations between the two parties.¹ Though this agreement between the Vatican and Israel was, on one level, a political document undertaken by two sovereign subjects of international law for the purpose of exchanging ambassadors, it was also emblematic of a more significant rapprochement. The tensions that characterized the relationship between the Vatican and the state of Israel, particularly in the decade after 1948, had their roots much deeper in the historical relationship between Roman Catholicism and Judaism. The Roman Catholic Church, in the main, had historically viewed Judaism as a fallacious and pariah faith, and the Jews a group destined to wander the earth for their complicity in the death of the Christian saviour, Jesus Christ. The 'historical' proof of this theology, according to numerous early Christian theologians, was evidenced by the first century destruction of Judaea at the hand of the Romans: the overthrow of the Jewish king, the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, and the dispersal of the Jewish people.

¹ While the original agreement settled the property rights of the Roman Catholic Church in Israel, the issue of Jerusalem was not raised in the document, despite the fact that the Vatican, down to 1993, continued to hold the official position that the city should be internationalized. As a result of these negotiations, the Vatican named Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezomolo its first apostolic nuncio to Israel in 1994. For a fuller analysis of the accords, see Marshall J. Breger, ed. *The Vatican-Israel Accords: Political, Legal and Theological Contexts* (Notre Dame, 2004).

Down to the twentieth century, papal aversions to the return of the Jews to Palestine continued to be shaped by this fundamental conviction. This theological view, of course, also shaped the Vatican's opposition to political Zionism, particularly as this movement gained momentum from the late nineteenth century onward. The idea that the Jews might return to Palestine to establish sovereign control there and that the most sacred Holy Sites of Christianity, directly related to the life and death of Christ, might fall under their jurisdiction, was unthinkable to the popes of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Theodor Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism, discovered this in 1904 when he was received by Pope Pius X in Rome. "The soil of Jerusalem," the pope informed his guest, "is sacred to the life of Jesus Christ. As head of the Church, I cannot say otherwise. The Jews did not recognize Our Lord and thus we cannot recognize the Jewish people."² In essence, the statement made clear that the Church, for reasons both historical and theological, could not endorse the creation of a Hebrew home in Palestine. As the Zionist movement gained momentum in the early decades of the twentieth century, and particularly after the Balfour Declaration of 1917, Vatican opposition Jewish territorial sovereignty in the Holy Land (*Terra Santa*) grew more entrenched. In the decisive years after 1945, a period which witnessed the birth of the Israeli state, Vatican anti-Zionist policies were put to the test, first in attempts to block the partition of Palestine at the UN, and next to secure Jerusalem and its environs as an international, sovereign *corpus separatum*, independent of either Israeli or Jordanian control.³

² See Uri Bialer, *The Cross on the Star of David: The Christian World in Israel's Foreign Policy, 1948-1967* (Bloomington, 2005): 2.

³ A *corpus separatum* (Latin for 'separated body') was the phrase used to describe Jerusalem's theoretical extraterritoriality during the debates on the partition of Palestine at the UN. The 1947 UN Partition Plan,

In recent decades, a small but very good body of scholarship has emerged that examines the Vatican's response to the rise of political Zionism and to the creation of the state of Israel, as well as papal relations with the nascent state in its formative years. Sergio Minerbi's *The Vatican and Zionism: Conflict in the Holy Land, 1895-1925* (1990) provides a comprehensive analysis of the historical roots of the Vatican's position on political Zionism in the early years of that movement.⁴ Minerbi traces the Vatican's anxiety towards the potential of Jewish sovereignty over the Holy Sites of Palestine, as well as the active, and often frenetic, diplomacy of papal nuncios in opposing the Balfour Declaration of 1917 (in which Britain pledged to support the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine). The failure of the Vatican to secure even the most modest of its demands, as Minerbi skilfully delineates, was but a prelude to setbacks later in the century. Livia Rokach's *The Catholic Church and the Question of Palestine* (1987) provides a competent overview of Vatican reactions to developments in the territory from the Balfour Declaration to the Six Day War (1967).⁵ More comprehensive is Andrej Kreutz's *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict* (1990), which explores the evolution of papal policy on the Palestine question, but which also examines the Vatican's relationship with the Palestinian national movement through the twentieth century.⁶ George Irani's *The Papacy and the Middle East: The Role of the Holy See in the Arab-Israeli Conflict*,

in fact, proposed a *corpus separatum* for Jerusalem and its surrounding territory, which encompassed the towns of Bethlehem, Ein Karem and Abu Dis.

⁴ See Sergio Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism: Conflict in the Holy Land, 1895-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990)

⁵ See Livia Rokach, *The Catholic Church and the Question of Palestine* (London: Saqi Books, 1987)

⁶ See Andrej Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990)

1962-1984 (1986) complements Kreutz's analysis, with a particular focus on papal policy in the region after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).⁷ A number of articles by Silvio Ferrari have more specifically examined the Vatican's quest to secure access to the Holy Sites of Palestine in the postwar years, as well as delineating failed papal attempts to secure an internationalized Jerusalem in the same period.⁸ More recently, Uri Bialer's *Cross on the Star of David: The Christian World in Israel's Foreign Policy, 1948-1967* (2005) examines Israeli perspectives on the relationship with the Vatican in the post-1948 period, revealing the extent to which Tel Aviv considered the Vatican a genuine threat to the interests of the nascent state.

While this study builds upon these works, it ranges beyond the existing historiography by examining two important aspects of the Vatican's relationship with Zionism and the state of Israel. The first half of the study examines the fundamentally transnational nature of Roman Catholic attitudes towards political Zionism, with a particular focus on Catholics in the United States. The second half of the study examines the Vatican's political efforts to constrain Zionist ambitions in the post-1945 decade, with a focus on the political advocacy of American Catholics on behalf of the papal secretariat. I contend that the transnational consensus that existed among Roman Catholics on the question of Zionism, combined with the growing power and influence of the Catholic Church in the United States, gave American Catholic leaders a unique ability to transmit

⁷ See George Irani, *The Papacy and the Middle East: The Role of the Holy See in the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1962-1984* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986)

⁸ See Silvio Ferrari's "The Holy See and the postwar Palestine issue: the Internationalization of Jerusalem and the protection of the Holy Places." *International Affairs* (Summer 1984):261-283; "The Vatican, Israel and the Jerusalem Question, 1943-1984." *The Middle East Journal* 39, 2 (Spring 1985): 316-331.

the Vatican's Palestine policy both to the UN and to the most powerful capital in the world. As such, American Catholics became the leading advocates of papal policy on a number of postwar questions, including Palestine.

In this sense, my focus here is the fundamentally transnational character of Vatican diplomacy on the question of Zionism and in its relations with Israel. In recent decades, a growing body of scholarship has examined diplomatic and international relations through a transnational lens.⁹ As defined and practised by scholars such as Akira Iriye, Ian Tyrell, David Thelan and Patricia Clavin, transnational history concerns the movement of people, ideas, technologies and institutions across national boundaries. In the field of international relations, transnational history seeks to range beyond the examination of relations between sovereign governments and their diplomats to consider the influence of a range of non-governmental actors who influence global affairs, including international cultural, religious and ideological organizations and bodies, diaspora communities, multinational corporations and the international media.

⁹ Transnational perspectives have been employed by historians in various forms throughout the twentieth century. *Annales* historian Fernand Braudel's *The Mediterranean in the Age of Phillip II* (1949), could be considered a forerunner of the transnational genre, as he explores geographic, economic and demographic influences while political influences, and specifically the role of European rulers, were considered the ephemera of history. Political scientists Joseph Nye and Robert Keohane edited a collection of essays on transnational politics, *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (1970), which further defined the field and which included an essay by sociologist Ivan Vallier on the Roman Catholic Church as a transnational actor. More recently, a collection edited by Akira Iriye and Thomas Bender, *Rethinking American History in a Global Age* (2002), presented the perspectives of a number of leading scholars in the field of transnational history, specifically addressing the challenge of writing national histories in an increasingly globalized and interconnected age. On further attempts to define the field, see David Thelan, 'The Nation and Beyond: Transnational Perspectives on United States History', *Journal of American History*, 86, 3 (1999); Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14, 4, (Nov., 2005): 421-439.

The definition offered in 1972 by political scientists Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, that transnationalism describes “contacts, coalitions and interactions across state boundaries that were not directly controlled by the central policy organs of government” appeared to outline the essence of the concept.¹⁰ For historians employing a transnational perspective, however, arriving at a unitary definition has proven somewhat more elusive, particularly as the body of scholarship in the area of transnational history has expanded in the last decade. Thelan has characterized transnational encounters as “border crossings”, examining how particular values, ideologies and cultures passed through and over national boundaries, often with ethnic and political diaspora communities, in the process transforming nation-states and rendering political boundaries increasingly less important.¹¹ More recently, Clavin has challenged more traditional definitions by contending that rather than view transnational communities as fixed or bound networks, it is more accurate to view them as more malleable structures where individuals, groups and ideologies wither away to be replaced by new groups and ideas.¹² The very survival of these networks, posits Clavin, was dependant on their flexibility and malleability. While Clavin’s definition can be accurately applied to the historical development of a number of twentieth century transnational communities, it is less applicable to Roman Catholic transnationalism in the decades before the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), when orthodoxy and ideological consensus, as opposed to malleability, characterized the international Church. In this sense, the form of transnationalism I examine in this study is

¹⁰ Keohane, Robert and Joseph Nye, eds. *Transnational Relations and World Politics*, xi.

¹¹ See Thelan, ‘The Nation and Beyond’, 968.

¹² See Clavin, ‘Defining Transnationalism’, 438-439.

more akin to the traditional definitions offered by Keohane, Nye and Thelan, among others.

The Roman Catholic Church, as an international religious organization which maintains an extensive network of national hierarchies and which oversees nearly three thousand territorial dioceses around the world, represents the quintessence of a transnational actor in global affairs. Much of the existing historiography on Vatican diplomacy, however, including work on the relationship between the Vatican and Israel, has centred on traditional channels of diplomatic exchange; namely popes, nuncios and apostolic delegates (papal diplomats), ministers and heads of state.¹³ This focus has proven fruitful in examining the Vatican's formal relations with nation-states, particularly in the area of concordat (treaty) negotiations, whereby the Church has sought specific guarantees and rights for Roman Catholics in a given state or territory. Papal nuncios also played a crucial role in transmitting papal policies and demands to national governments, as the history of Vatican relations with Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Communist Poland so vividly illustrates.

A strict focus on high diplomacy, however, does not adequately explain the Vatican's postwar relationship to Zionism and the Israeli state. In the United States, which was home to the most powerful national branch of the international Roman Catholic Church, the apostolic delegate in Washington did not often communicate papal

¹³ Robert A. Graham, S.J.'s *Vatican Diplomacy: A Study of Church and State on the International Plane* (1959) remains a forceful examination of the structure and method of the Vatican's diplomatic activities. More recently, essays in Peter C. Kent and John Pollard's *Papal Diplomacy in the Modern Age* (Westport, 1994) have explored papal diplomacy in a range of twentieth century contexts. For a perspective on modern papal diplomacy, see Thomas J. Reese's *Inside the Vatican: The Politics and Organization of the Catholic Church* (Cambridge, 2003).

demands on Palestine directly to the American government. These policies, instead, were commuted to the American bishops through their national council, the National Catholic Welfare Council (NCWC) in Washington D.C. The bishops, in turn, coordinated a pervasive campaign designed to steer American and United Nations (UN) policy on Israel toward lines amenable to the Vatican and the international Roman Catholic Church. This campaign extended beyond the bishops themselves, and encompassed lay Catholic organizations, sub-committees of the NCWC, and papal associations under the jurisdiction of American Catholic leaders. The American Catholic press was also deployed in the battle for public opinion, as both the Vatican and the American bishops were cognizant of the potential clout of the ‘Catholic vote’ in Washington’s policy considerations. American Catholic activism, moreover, came at the head of an international Roman Catholic lobby on Palestine, hence the importance of considering the transnational dimension of the Vatican’s relationship to Zionism and the nascent Israeli state.

In recent decades, a small body of scholarship has explored the transnational character of Vatican diplomacy. Sociologist Ivan Vallier’s 1972 essay ‘The Roman Catholic Church: A Transnational Actor’ delineated the multi-faceted organization of the international Church, which pursued its objectives not only through the Vatican secretariat and its network of papal diplomats, but also through a global network of religious and lay Catholic organizations.¹⁴ Vallier’s focus, however, remained contemporary, and did not explore the historical dimensions of Vatican transnationalism.

¹⁴ See Ivan Vallier, ‘The Roman Catholic Church: A Transnational Actor’ in Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye’s *Transnational Relations and World Politics* (Cambridge, 1972): 129- 152.

More recent scholarship by Lisa L. Ferrari and Jeffrey Haynes has similarly considered the contemporary aspects of Vatican transnationalism, examining papal attempts to shape questions on social justice, bioethics and migration through its international network of national hierarchies, religious and lay organizations.¹⁵ My own research seeks to examine this transnational aspect of papal diplomacy as it applied to the historical relationship between the Vatican and Zionism, positing that Roman Catholic transnationalism was a more potent a force in the first half of the twentieth century than it was in the decades after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).

This study is indebted to the work of Peter D’Agostino, whose *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (2005) explored the transnational nature of Catholic ideology from the middle of the nineteenth century to the interwar decades.¹⁶ D’Agostino posits that Catholics in the United States “forged an imagined community with myths, shared symbols and a calendar of prescribed rituals,” with the Holy See in Rome comprising the spiritual and physical centre of this community.¹⁷ He reveals how American Catholics demonstrated solidarity with the popes through public rituals and political agitation that distinguished Catholics from their non-Catholic neighbours. D’Agostino traces this American Catholic exceptionalism through reaction to the Roman Question and the rise of Mussolini’s Fascist regime. Throughout

¹⁵ See Lisa L. Ferrari’s ‘The Vatican as a Transnational Actor’ in Paul Christopher Manuel, Lawrence Reardon and Clyde Wilcox, eds. *The Catholic Church and the Nation State: Comparative Perspectives* (Washington, 2006): 33-50; Jeffrey Haynes, *Religion, Politics and International Relations* (New York, 2011): 173-211.

¹⁶ Peter D’Agostino, *Rome in America: Transnational Catholic Ideology from the Risorgimento to Fascism* (Chapel Hill, 2005).

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 7.

the nineteenth century, American Catholics rose to the defence of papal demands for territorial sovereignty (the Roman Question), a position which placed them at odds with Protestant, Jewish and liberal Americans, the latter whom regarded the emergence of a unified, democratic and anti-clerical Italy as the liberal and progressive realization of millennial hopes.

Similar patterns emerged with American Catholic sympathy and support for Mussolini and Fascist Italy. As D'Agostino outlines, American Catholics (particularly Italian Americans) followed the lead of papal Rome in participating in rituals legitimizing Mussolini's regime, as the Italian embassy in Washington forged strong relations with the bishops and Catholic laity. American Catholic sympathy for Fascist Italy was demonstrated, on a political plane, by demands that Washington repeal its embargo on Rome during the Italo-Ethiopian War of 1935-1936, as outlined in chapter one of this study. The absence of an anti-Fascist movement among American Catholics, moreover, underscored a solidarity with papal Rome (which had come to endorse Mussolini's regime after 1929), and again generated frictions between Catholics and their non-Catholic fellow citizens.

American Catholic attitudes towards Zionism through the first half of the twentieth century dovetail neatly with the patterns revealed by D'Agostino. I contend, in fact, that the Vatican's diplomatic efforts to shape the Palestine question in the first decade of the Cold War must be understood in the context of this shared transnational opposition to Zionism. As chapter one outlines, such a consensus did exist between Rome and the American bishops from the time of the Balfour Declaration onward. This was despite frictions between Rome and the American bishops earlier in the century, when

papal fears of doctrinal and theological autonomy in the American Church led to a crackdown.¹⁸ The Catholic consensus on Zionism, in fact, grew stronger in the interwar decades, as the Zionist lobby itself grew more powerful and strident. This transnational Catholic reticence to Zionism also proved remarkably resilient. Even the Holocaust, which would create significant pockets of sympathy for Zionism in the United States, did not fundamentally alter the Vatican nor American Catholic opposition to the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. While American Catholics expressed sympathy with the plight of European Jews, often in language more explicit than that of Pope Pius XII, they stopped firmly short of endorsing the Zionist program. When a Catholic leader did express sympathy with Zionism, as the case of New Orleans' Archbishop Joseph Rummel illustrates in chapter two, the Vatican moved quickly to suppress it, evidence of the unanimity Rome would demand on the question.

In the postwar period, this transnational consensus melded into political action, with American Catholics at the forefront of efforts to shape developments on postwar Palestine. A number of factors had made the American bishops leading voices in the international Church. Through the interwar decades and during the war, leading archbishops such as Detroit's Edward Mooney, New York's Francis Spellman and Chicago's George Mundelein had cultivated close ties with President Franklin Roosevelt and the Democratic Party. Institutionally, the Catholic Church in the United States had

¹⁸ The Americanist controversy, at its core, was characterized by a belief in papal circles that a number of American bishops endorsed a separation of church and state (where the Vatican favoured a closer cooperation akin to European models of church-state relations). The Vatican feared that the American episcopate, functioning in a pluralistic and rapidly industrializing society, would adopt a relativistic approach to Church doctrine and theology. Pope Leo XIII's 1899 encyclical, *Testem benevolentiae*, was specifically issued to suppress the Americanist heresy.

expanded steadily after the First World War, bolstered by waves of Catholic immigration from Europe and high birth rates. This growth boosted the financial might of the American Church. As John F. Pollard's recent study of Vatican finances reveals, New York, Boston and Chicago, in that order, were the three wealthiest archdioceses in the world by 1939.¹⁹ The Vatican, increasingly isolated in Europe and anxious to tap into the resources of the American Church, grew progressively closer to the American episcopate in the interwar years. This was firstly through the creation of associations such as the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA), which was placed entirely in the hands of the American bishops, and which would play an important role in postwar Roman Catholic efforts in on Palestine. The Vatican also placed American prelates in ever higher positions of authority in the papal secretariat, another sign of the interwar 'turn' towards the American Catholic Church. President Roosevelt's creation of a 'personal representative' to the Holy See in 1939, moreover, appeared to signal ever closer relations between the papacy and the United States.

As the postwar era dawned, it appeared that Washington, the Vatican and the American Catholic bishops did comprise an informal, yet ideologically cohesive strategic alliance that was primarily committed to the containment and rollback of Soviet communism. On the question of Palestine, however, a distinctive American Catholic lobby emerged which clearly diverged from Washington's policy on the territory. On this issue, the American bishops clearly took their ideological and political lead from Rome. The transnational consensus that D'Agostino revealed on the Roman Question and

¹⁹ See John F. Pollard, *Money and the Rise of the Modern Papacy: Financing the Vatican, 1850-1950* (London, 2005).

Mussolini's Italy had survived the war intact, manifesting itself forcefully on the question of Palestine. And as in previous cases, American Catholic positions on Zionism placed them at odds with Protestants, Jews and liberals, a majority of whom had come to support the creation of a Jewish home in the territory. The Vatican had high hopes that the American bishops, given their ties in Washington, increasing financial might, and growing public profile, and given their role as lynch-pins in the Vatican-American relationship, might be uniquely endowed to transmit the Vatican's postwar designs both in Washington and at the UN. Roman Catholic political pressure, both from Rome and the various organs of the American Church, however, were ultimately unable to alter the policy direction of Washington on the Palestine question. Throughout the postwar years, President Harry Truman and American policymakers remained committed to a cautious and seemingly malleable line designed to appease both opponents and proponents of the internationalization of Jerusalem, while remaining a steadfast ally of the nascent Israeli state. Chapters three, four and five of this study trace the rise, and ultimate demise, of this American Catholic lobby on Palestine.

As this study is centred on the institutional responses of the American Catholic Church to the rise of political Zionism and the creation of the state of Israel, it has drawn heavily on a number of important archival collections in the United States. The papers of the NCWC, housed at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., were indispensable to this work. The NCWC was the American bishops conference, and as such, it was the administrative nerve-centre of the political activities of the American episcopate. The communications of the Holy See to the American bishops, moreover, was most usually channelled through the secretary general of the NCWC, making these papers

essential to delineating the relationship between the Vatican secretariat and American Catholic leaders. This collection also contains the papers of the Office of UN Affairs, an NCWC mandated NGO which advocated the positions of the Vatican at the UN from 1946 onward. The papers of Catherine Schaefer, who directed the UN Office from 1946 to 1972, and who worked tirelessly to promote the Roman Catholic position on Palestine at the world body, are also found in this collection. The papers of Schaefer's assistant, Alba Zizzamia, who spearheaded a number of important initiatives on the Palestine question in her own right, have also been examined.

Also in Washington are the National Archives and Record Administration (NARA) collections and the archives of Georgetown University (Georgetown Special Collections), both of which have been consulted for this study. NARA holds the papers of Myron C. Taylor, who served as 'special representative' to Pope Pius XII for both President Franklin Roosevelt and President Harry Truman from 1939 to 1951. Taylor's papers are vital to illuminating the relationship between the Vatican and Washington from the beginning of the Second World War through the early Cold War, as well as being an important window on the mind of the Vatican secretariat, particularly as it related to Palestine. The Taylor papers also contained the extensive correspondence of Truman with New York's Cardinal Spellman on the Palestine question, which is examined in chapter four of this study. The 'Palestine Notebook' of Dean Rusk and Robert McClintock, also at NARA, provide valuable insight into the views of the American delegation to the UN during the crucial period of 1946 to 1949. Georgetown's Special Collections hold the papers of a number of figures germane to this study, including Senator Robert F. Wagner, Edmund Walsh and Wilfred Parsons, as well as the

papers of *America*, an American Jesuit magazine that exemplified the transnational Roman Catholic consensus on Zionism.

Other archival collections have also been utilized. The papers of Archbishop Edward Mooney, housed at the archives of the Archdiocese of Detroit, have revealed the views of a leading American bishop of the era, who was raised to Cardinal by Pope Pius XII in 1946, and who served as chairman of the NCWC from 1935 to 1945. Also in Detroit are the archives of the Walter P. Reuther Library, at Wayne State University, which hold the papers of Philip Slomowitz, influential editor of the *Detroit Jewish News*, and an outspoken critic of Roman Catholic attacks on Zionism. In the late stages of preparing this manuscript, I was also granted preliminary access to the papers of Mgr. Thomas McMahon, which are housed at the archives of the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) in New York. These papers, which were heretofore unavailable to scholars, provide important details on the diplomatic efforts of McMahon who, as the acting head of the CNEWA between 1944 and 1955, functioned as the de facto Vatican envoy to Israel. McMahon's meetings and correspondences with a number of key figures, including President Harry Truman, James McDonald (the first American ambassador to Israel), David Ben-Gurion, Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett, various high-ranking ministers in the Israeli government, prominent American Zionist leaders, and King Abdullah of Jordan, among others, reveals his unique role as an unofficial yet crucial intermediary in early Cold War Vatican-Israeli dialogue. McMahon's close working relationship with New York's Cardinal Francis Spellman, the most powerful figure in postwar American Catholicism (and whose papers remain closed to scholars), further underscores the significance of these records. I have been afforded full access to

McMahon's papers when they have been catalogued in their entirety by the summer of 2012.

Anyone studying the Cold War Vatican must contend with the fact that its papers for the postwar period remain closed. In spite of this, a number of available sources provide a window on the Vatican's Palestine policy during the period of this study. For the war years, the eleven volume *Actes et Documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (ADSS), published between 1965 and 1981, provides a fairly comprehensive picture of the Vatican's reaction to the Holocaust, as well as its inflexible stance on the creation of a Jewish home in Palestine.²⁰ The Myron C. Taylor papers also reveal the Holy See's position on developments in Palestine. Supplementing these is Ennio Di Nolfo's *Vaticano e Stati Uniti, 1939-1952 (dalle carte di Myron C. Taylor)* (1978), a published collection, based on Taylor's papers, which includes numerous references to the Palestine question.²¹ The NCWC papers, which contain ample correspondence between the apostolic delegate (the Vatican's representative to the American Catholic Church), and the American bishops, have also proven valuable.

In this study, I have also examined a wide cross-section of the American Catholic press. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the weekly newspapers of the various archdioceses and dioceses (the diocesan press) were published under the editorial control of the NCWC's Press Department and local bishops. As such, the editorial lines of these papers could accurately be described as the official mind of the Church on a variety of

²⁰ Blet, Pierre and Robert Graham, eds. *Actes et Documents du Saint Siège relatifs à la seconde guerre mondiale*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1967-1981.

²¹ See Ennio Di Nolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti, 1939-1952* (Bologna: Franco Angeli Editore, 1978).

social and political questions. The overwhelming consensus in the diocesan press on the Palestine question only underscores this fact. I have also examined a number of large-circulation American Catholic journals which lay outside of the editorial control of the NCWC, such as the Jesuit weekly *America*, the Paulist *Catholic World* and the lay *Commonweal*, to illustrate that this consensus on Palestine extended beyond the diocesan papers. Contrarian views were not selectively weeded out- virtually none were found.

I have also utilized the Catholic press because, from the beginning of the Second World War, and particularly after 1945, the Vatican encouraged and often instructed Catholic editors in the United States to disseminate the Roman Catholic position on Palestine widely. This was particularly so after the American Catholic lobby was countered by an active campaign in the American Jewish press which sought to diffuse the criticisms of Zionist tactics in American diocesan newspapers. Concern about negative reportage in the American Catholic press reached all the way to Tel Aviv, where government officials, including David Ben-Gurion, urged moderation on Catholic editors, and encouraged a vigorous response from Jewish papers. The Catholic press, as such, became a key tool in the American Catholic lobby on Palestine, particularly as sympathy for Zionism among non-Catholics burgeoned after 1945.

Chapter 1

Origins: The Vatican, American Catholics and Zionism, 1897-1939

The Vatican's hostility to political Zionism in the 19th and 20th centuries, and its disapproval of the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine, is a policy which has its roots deep in the history of relations between Christianity and Judaism.¹ Its origins, in fact, extend back to the life, and particularly the death, of Jesus. The charge that Jews had been responsible for the murder of the Christian saviour spawned an entrenched antagonism for Jews and for Judaism among early Christian theologians and Church leaders. In short order, the deicidal Jews became the archetypal evildoers and outcasts in Christian societies. References to deicide could be found in the gospels, but it was the Church Fathers who ensconced notions of Judaism's inferiority and depravity in the early Church. Christian writers such as Origen, Tertullian, Augustine and John Chrysostom, among others, interpreted the New Testament in a manner which made antagonism to Judaism appear as a part of the very mission of Christ. Portrayals of Jews as rapacious hypocrites, children of hell and of the devil, haters of and rejected by God, and deicidal were found throughout the early Christian scriptures. By the 6th century, such attitudes had been absorbed by civil authorities and ensconced into legal codes. The Justinian

¹ For a succinct overview of the relationship between early Christianity and Judaism, see Edward Kessler, *An Introduction to Jewish-Christian Relations* (Cambridge, 2010): 1-64; Robert Michael, *Holy Hatred: Christianity, Anti-Semitism and the Holocaust* (Basingstoke, 2006): 1-104. On the historical development of Christian anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, see Marvin Perry and Frederick Schweitzer, *Anti-Semitism: Myth and Hate from Antiquity to the Present* (New York, 2002).

Code (534), which for centuries would serve as a juridical guidepost in the West, removed Jewish rights and classified them, with other non-Christians, as heretics. Later laws, published “in the name of our Lord and God Jesus Christ,” punished Jewish marriages as “abominable,” forbade circumcision of converts, and limited ways in which Jews could worship.²

Roman Catholic resistance to the idea of a Jewish home in Palestine could also be traced to the early Church, and was strongly linked to the notion of Judaism as a pariah faith. That the Jews had lost their place as the ‘chosen’, in the eyes of God, and had been supplanted by Christianity was prophesied, according to these writers, by the fall of Israel to the Romans. The destruction of the temple at Jerusalem in 70 CE, and the dispersal of the Jewish peoples appeared to confirm this Christian triumph over Judaism. Tertullian considered the Roman victory over the Jews, and the loss of their capital, as evidence of God’s abandonment of the Jews and their punishment in this life and the next. Ambrose, the 4th century bishop of Milan, and his famous disciple, Augustine of Hippo, both identified Jews with the fratricide Cain, who was condemned to wander the earth as suffering examples to Christians who might be tempted to revolt against their faith. The Christian identification of the Jews with Cain repudiated, in essence, the very notion of a permanent Jewish home in Palestine, or anywhere. According to Christian teachings, the Jews were no longer the divinely chosen witnesses to God’s moral message, but a rightfully suffering pariah group, condemned to eternal wandering for their mortal sin against Christ.

² Michael, *Holy Hatred*, 38.

The emergence of this increasingly virulent Christian anti-Judaism, which denied the right of Jewish settlement in the Holy Land, coincided with the growing presence of Christian groups in Palestine itself. This began in earnest during the reign of Constantine the Great (306-337), who had famously promulgated the Edict of Toleration which had ended Christian persecution in the Roman Empire. Constantine's mother, Helena, reputedly made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where she uncovered the remnants of the True Cross and the tomb of Christ, discoveries which were intended to suggest Christianity's ancestral and legitimate stake in the territory. Over the next several centuries, an ambitious program of building, which included the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem (the reputed site of Christ's resurrection), appeared to cement the official presence, and primacy, of the Christian Church in Palestine. The fall of Christian Palestine to Muslim invaders, beginning in the 7th century, only served to inspire the Crusades, which sought to expunge the 'infidels' from the most sacred territory of the Christian faith. Though the Crusades were officially launched to dislodge the Muslim caliphates from the Holy Land, European Jews were frequently brutalized by departing Christian armies, still considered guilty of a much more grievous injury to Christ, his crucifixion. It was against this theological and historical backdrop that a Roman Catholic opposition to the very idea of a return of the Jews to Palestine was forged, a view which persisted into the 20th century.

For centuries after the Crusades, the Holy Places continued to be the focus of inter-faith disputes, given that Palestine was also home to sites sacred to Judaism and Islam. Because the territory held such symbolic and historic importance to Christianity and Islam, the rival monotheistic faiths of Europe and the Near East, Palestine was also a

contested pawn in wider imperial struggles, as the history of the Crusades so vividly illustrates. Disputes between Christian groups themselves over the administration and control of holy sites were also prevalent. At sites such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churchmen struggled bitterly for control, echoing larger imperial struggles between the various Catholic empires of Western Europe, loyal to the popes, and Byzantium, which historically had opposed papal supremacy.

Ottoman suzerainty over the region from the sixteenth century forward created further challenges for Christian groups in Palestine. The Ottoman Sultans tended to favour Orthodox Christians in Palestine, who were their own subjects, at the expense of Latin (Roman Catholic) Christians, who were the subjects of European powers with whom the Sultans were frequently at war. As a result of frequent tensions between Latin and Orthodox Christians, and on occasion between Christians, Jews and Muslims, the Ottoman Government decreed in 1757 a *modus vivendi* between the faiths, an agreement that sought to prevent future disputes over jurisdiction by preserving the status quo, as it existed in 1757, in perpetuity. The edict, which became known as the 'Status Quo' agreement, applied to most of the sacred sites in Palestine, including Jerusalem's Wailing Wall, Tomb of the Virgin and the Sanctuary of the Ascension, and Bethlehem's Basilica of the Nativity and the Field of the Shepherds. The agreement, which was reaffirmed by Istanbul in 1853, was also incorporated into the Treaty of Paris (1856), which ended the Crimean War. Britain adopted the Status Quo into its Palestine Mandate in 1917, and as

late as 1947, Orthodox Christian representatives at the United Nations (UN) appealed to the juridical validity of the 200 year old edict.³

In the wake of the Status Quo agreement, the Holy See came to rely increasingly on the French crown, which maintained sound relations with the Ottomans, to defend its interests vis-a-vis the sultan, a position which France exploited to advance its own political and diplomatic ambitions in the Near East. By the nineteenth century Russia, which sporadically allied with the Ottomans, also accorded protection to the Greek Orthodox churches in Palestine, ostensibly to protect the rights of Orthodox Christians and their Holy Places.⁴ As Ottoman power declined throughout the century, the interest of the European Great Powers in the region intensified, with the alleged objective of protecting pilgrimage sites providing a flimsy cover for larger political, strategic and economic ends.

The history of relations between the Holy See and what would become the State of Israel originated in this 19th century competition of the European Great Powers for

³ United Nations representatives on the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC) referred to the Status Quo agreement between 1947 and 1949 in determining the validity of claims made by Orthodox churchmen in Palestine. See 'United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, Committee on Jerusalem- The Holy Places: Note on the History of the Status Quo, Working Paper Prepared by the Secretariat', 8 April 1949, National Catholic Welfare Conference (hereafter NCWC), Office of the General Secretary (hereafter OGS), Archives of the Catholic University of America (hereafter ACUA), Box 44, File 22.

⁴ The best scholarly examination of the Holy See's confrontation with pre-state political Zionism remains Sergio Minerbi's *The Vatican and Zionism: Conflict in the Holy Land, 1895-1925* (New York, 1990). My brief examination here is indebted to this work. Competition between France and Russia in the Near East, under the auspicious guise of protecting the Christian 'Holy Places' of the Ottoman Empire, lay at the heart of the dispute that would culminate in the Crimean War (1854-1856). Both Napoleon III and Nicholas I, citing previous treaties, claimed jurisdiction as trustee and protector of Christian pilgrimage sites. For a succinct treatment of the diplomatic intrigues leading to the war, see Norman Rich, *Great Power Diplomacy, 1814-1914* (Boston, 1992), 101-122.

influence and strategic advantage in the Near East.⁵ This strategic contest for advantage in the Near East and central Asia, which historians would come to label the ‘Great Game’, also drew the Holy See into the political and diplomatic intrigues of the region. In short order, the contest for Palestine drew all of the powers into the territory, each seeking a stake in the Holy Land. In 1841, in an effort to check the expansionist leanings of imperial Russia, Great Britain and Prussia established a Protestant bishopric in Jerusalem. France and Austria-Hungary, as nominal allies of the Holy See, represented papal claims against Orthodox and Protestant challenges. The Holy See itself jumped into the fray, preferring not to leave its bidding entirely to its Catholic allies. In 1837, Pope Gregory XVI had extended the authority of the Melkite (Arabic Eastern Catholic) patriarch of Antioch to Alexandria and Jerusalem, re-establishing a Catholic ecclesiastical structure in Palestine absent for centuries.⁶ In 1847, the Latin (Roman Catholic) Patriarch was finally re-established in the Holy Land, and the Uniate Churches (Syrian Catholic, Maronite, Armenian, Chaldean Catholic), though small by comparison, were re-organized and strengthened in order to undertake new missions.⁷

From the 1850s to the end of the century, the Roman Catholic Church opened dozens of new hostels for pilgrims, and even more schools, hospitals, clinics and orphanages for the local Catholic population. These institutions were staffed by more

⁵ Among the best single volume sources on the complicated ‘Eastern Question’ in European diplomacy remain two works by M.S. Anderson, *The Eastern Question, 1774-1923* (New York, 1966); *The Great Powers and the Near East, 1774-1923* (New York, 1970).

⁶ Although the Roman Catholic hierarchy had not functioned in Palestine since the end of the thirteenth century, the Church had always maintained a presence there. After 1333, it was represented by the Franciscan Order. See F. Michael Perko, S.J., ‘Toward a “Sound and Lasting Basis”’: Relations between the Holy See, The Zionist Movement and Israel, 1896-1996’, *Israel Studies* (Vol. 2, No. 1) Spring 1997, 3.

⁷ Andrej Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, (New York, 1990), 31.

than thirty male and female religious orders, sent by the Holy See to establish a firmer presence in the Near East. As the Ottoman grip on the region weakened in the latter stages of the century, over 100 new churches and chapels were constructed or re-constituted in Palestine, evidence of a Christian revival in a land so long under the sultanate's yoke.

This does not suggest that the Holy See maintained strained relations with Istanbul. On the contrary, Ottoman administrators allowed Roman Catholic religious a generous degree of autonomy in establishing communities and administering to their faithful, cognizant of Istanbul's weakening position in Europe, and mindful of the papacy's influence with heavily Catholic powers such as France, Austria-Hungary, Spain and Italy. Amicable relations with the Ottomans allowed the papacy to protect and to cultivate the growing population of Christian Arabs in the region which, though small in number, were beginning to exert a widening influence in Palestine. Christians Arabs, unlike Muslims, were disproportionately urban and middle class. Because their occupational distribution was most similar to that of the Jewish population, Christians were generally more concerned about commercial competition from the small Jewish population than from their Muslim compatriots.⁸ These indigenous Christian groups, who spoke Arabic and were considered, along with Muslims, as Arabs, would form the nucleus of both Arab nationalist and anti-Zionist movements in Palestine, and would play a role in the Holy See's policy towards the region well into the twentieth century.⁹

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Vatican reticence to political Zionism was, of course, also tied to papal reticence to modern nationalism in general. The papacy's 19th century clash with Italian liberal nationalism, which resulted in a complete

The Holy See and Zionism, 1897-1922

From the start, the founders of modern political Zionism understood the importance of harmonizing the goals of Jewish nationalism with the Holy See's position in Palestine.¹⁰ To this end, Zionist leaders actively sought the support and sanction of the Roman Church. The importance of protecting the sanctity and security of Christian sites was well understood by leading Zionist figures. Theodor Herzl, spiritual father of political Zionism and author of the seminal *Der Judenstaat* (The State of the Jews), the foundational manifesto of modern Zionism, expressed this in an 1896 meeting with Cardinal Antonio Agliardi, the papal nuncio in Vienna. "The sanctuaries of Christendom", Herzl assured the nuncio, "would be safeguarded by assigning to them an extra-territorial status such as is well known to the law of nations. We should form a guard of honour about these sanctuaries, answering for the fulfillment of this duty with our existence. This guard of honour would be the greatest symbol of the solution to the Jewish Question after eighteen centuries of Jewish suffering."¹¹ Herzl stressed that Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth would be excluded from a future Jewish state, internationalized, and possibly placed under the authority of the Holy See, pledges that would be repeated by a succession of Zionist leaders down to 1948.¹² Herzl would be the first Zionist leader, however, to encounter the Holy See's ambiguous yet ultimately

loss of the pope's temporal authority, had created a deep and lasting Vatican mistrust of liberal and/or romantic nationalist movements.

¹⁰ The best single volume treatment of the modern Zionist movement remains Walter Laqueur's *A History of Zionism* (New York, 1972).

¹¹ Theodor Herzl, *The Complete Diaries of Theodor Herzl* (New York, 1960), 1: 352-354. Quoted in Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 32.

¹² *Ibid.*

disproving attitudes towards Zionism. In his diary, he confided that he left the meeting with doubts about Agliardi's sincerity, fearing that the nuncio regarded the goals of political Zionism untenable and at odds with papal designs for the territory.

Herzl's scepticism of Vatican support was piqued again the following year. In May of 1897, on the eve of the first World Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland, the Roman Catholic Church issued its first official statement on Zionism. The Jesuit newspaper, *Civiltà Cattolica*, which closely mirrored the Vatican's line on international affairs and inter-faith relations, proclaimed its position on a Jewish homeland as Zionist delegates arrived in Basle:

One thousand, eight hundred and twenty-seven years have passed since the prediction of Jesus of Nazareth was fulfilled, namely that Jerusalem would be destroyed...As for a rebuilt Jerusalem, which might become the centre of a reconstituted state of Israel, we must add that this is contrary to the predictions of Christ himself who foretold that 'Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled' (Luke 21:24), that is...until the end of the world.¹³

In no uncertain terms, the statement clarified Rome's opposition to political Zionism on both theological and political grounds, and announced that the Church could not support the ultimate aims of the Zionist movement.

Perhaps more definitive was Herzl's rebuff during a visit to Rome in January 1904. He was afforded the opportunity of audiences with both Pope Pius X and the Secretary of State, Cardinal Merry del Val, evidence of his growing prestige as leader of the Zionist movement. The granting of the audience itself was also a sign of the Pope's benign relationship with Judaism, in contrast to the coarser attitudes of his nineteenth

¹³ *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1 May 1897. Quoted in Livia Rokach, *The Catholic Church and the Question of Palestine* (London, 1987), 11.

century predecessors. Both Pius X and Merry del Val, in fact, were known for their strong relationship with the Italian Jewish community. As the pope pointed out to Herzl, “I have always been on good terms with Jews...after all, there are bonds other than those of religion: courtesy and philanthropy. These we do not deny the Jews. Indeed, we also pray for them.”¹⁴ Merry del Val emphasized that “the history of Israel is our heritage, it is our foundation”, and spent nearly an hour in intimate conversation with Herzl.¹⁵ Both Pius X and his Secretary of State, however, categorically refused any support for the Jewish nationalism espoused by Herzl and his followers. As Merry del Val explained to Herzl, since the Jews had denied the divinity of Christ, “How can we, without abandoning our highest principles, agree to their being given possession of the Holy Land again?”¹⁶ The pope echoed his resolute Secretary in delivering his verdict to Herzl. “We cannot give approval to the movement. We cannot prevent the Jews from going to Jerusalem, but we could never sanction it. The soil of Jerusalem, if it was not always sacred, has been sanctioned by the life of Jesus Christ. As the head of the Church, I cannot tell you anything different.” It was at the end of this audience that Pius X issued his infamous challenge to Zionism. “If you come to Palestine to settle your people there,” he informed his guest, “we shall have churches and priests ready to baptize all of you.”¹⁷

With this ended Herzl’s brief meeting with Pius X. While the pope offered Herzl general platitudes to the Jewish people, he could not sanction the ambitions of political

¹⁴ Herzl, *The Complete Diaries*, 4: 1604.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 1594, 1595.

¹⁶ *Ibid*.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 1602-1604.

Zionism, despite Herzl's persistent assurances that Christian sites would never fall under Zionist jurisdiction. The theological position of the Church, which had historically shaped the Holy See's international policy, placed it at irreconcilable odds with Zionist aspirations. It was a position, from Rome's standpoint, that could not be 'negotiated around'. Several months after Herzl's visit, Merry del Val elaborated on the Vatican's position in an interview with the Viennese Zionist journal *Die Welt*:

How can we deliver up the country of our redeemer to a people of a different faith? Whenever a bad book appears or an ugly picture which mocks us, or a newspaper which defames us- then... we find the Israelite behind it... Yet the Church would do nothing to impede the Zionists effort to obtain, "a home in Palestine secured by public law..." For that is quite another matter... If the Jews believe that they can ease their lot in the land of their fathers, that is a humanitarian question in our view. The foundation of the Holy See is apostolic; it will never oppose an undertaking that alleviates human misery.¹⁸

The Vatican, then, would not oppose migration of the Jews to Palestine on humanitarian grounds, but on theological grounds it could not support Zionism as a political movement, nor could it endorse the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. This was repeated to Heinrich York Steiner, as associate of Herzl, just weeks after the latter's Roman visit. Merry del Val assured Steiner that if the Jews wanted to establish agricultural colonies in Palestine, he would regard it as a humanitarian endeavour and not impede it.¹⁹ The Secretary of State, however, did not anticipate mass immigration leading to Jewish domination of the country, as would become the case by the later 1920's.

¹⁸ *Die Welt*, 1 April 1904. Quoted in Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, 101. *Die Welt*, which was edited by Herzl, is not to be confused with the German national daily newspaper of the same name, which was launched in 1946.

¹⁹ Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration* (London, 1961), 407. Quoted in Kreutz, *Vatican Policy*, 33.

The Vatican's position was to alter little through to the Balfour Declaration of 1917. From Herzl's visit forward, the Vatican came to realize that political Zionism posed a greater danger to its interests in Palestine than did any other Christian group or the Ottomans. As the Roman Catholic Church regarded itself as the one true faith, the Vatican realized the need to espouse a firm anti-Zionist position, while preventing the Church from being branded anti-Semitic. Though anti-Zionism could be explained as a rational policy, consistent with the Church's historical mission to safeguard its Holy Sites related to the life of Christ, charges of anti-Judaism or anti-Semitism could only impede the Holy See's larger objectives. This was particularly important as the global Zionist movement gained momentum in the years leading to war. It was a fine balance, however, that the papacy, with its diverse international flock, its network of national hierarchies, and its quasi-independent press (which included hundreds of diocesan newspapers), could not always manage.²⁰

Following Steiner's visit, nearly thirteen years would pass before the Vatican would receive another Zionist delegate. By the time Pope Benedict XV received Nahum Sokolow in 1917, however, the state of international relations had been significantly altered. While the World Zionist Organization (WZO) had been plagued by infighting for several years after Herzl's death in 1904, it had grown to become a formidable and multi-national movement by the eve of the First World War.²¹ The growth of international

²⁰ Though the Holy See attempted to oversee reportage in the American diocesan press, the American bishops, through the NCWC, primarily held the reins. Though these bishops were ultimately beholden to Rome, and to Church doctrine, Catholic editors and journalists in the United States did operate with some degree of independence. Considering this, the parallelism of Roman and American Catholic positions on Zionism was particularly significant.

²¹ On the rapid growth of international Zionism after 1904, see Laqueur, *A History of Zionism*, 136-208.

Zionism was fuelled by a rapid out-migration of Russian Jews escaping persecution and pogrom. From 1881 to 1914, nearly 170,000 Jews fled Russia, the majority heading for Germany, Britain and the United States. As a consequence, Berlin, London and Washington acted as international hubs of the movement through the war years. These states, in turn, remained keen to cultivate Zionist loyalties to further the war effort, an objective complicated by the fact that Germany would oppose both Britain, and eventually the United States, on the battlefields of Europe. All Zionists agreed, however, on the principle of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Sokolow's April 1917 visit to the Vatican came amidst this flush of optimism for the Zionist movement, in the afterglow of the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, which assigned the fate of Palestine to Britain and France after the inevitable fall of the Ottoman Empire, and as it appeared likely that the Allies would prevail over the Entente. Sokolow's confidence was further buoyed by Sir Mark Sykes, who had visited the Vatican a week earlier. In private conversations with Mgr. Eugenio Pacelli (the future Pope Pius XII), Cardinal Pietro Gasparri and Pope Benedict XV, Sykes came away with a strong impression that the Vatican was at last prepared to accept the aspirations of political Zionism.²² Sykes discussed the "immense difficulties which surrounded the question of Jerusalem...and the conflicting interests of the Latin and Greeks besides the aspirations of the various Powers."²³ Pacelli informed Sykes that the Vatican was not opposed to British protection of the Holy Places, and additionally that he did not oppose the Jewish settlement of Palestine, so long as the Holy Places remained under foreign,

²² At the time, Pacelli was secretary of state for extraordinary ecclesiastical affairs in the Vatican Secretariat, a position second only to Gasparri's in the development of Vatican foreign policy.

²³ Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, 107.

and preferably Christian, jurisdiction. Sykes, on his part, assured Pacelli that the Zionists had no intention of annexing these sites. After brief meetings with Gasparri and Benedict XV, Sykes remained convinced of the Vatican's goodwill. On 14 April 1917, Sykes apprised Sokolow of his meetings in Rome:

I visited Msgr. Pacelli, and was received in audience by His Holiness. On both occasions I [stressed] the intensity of Zionist feeling and the objects of Zionism. I was careful to impress that the main object of Zionism was to evolve a self-supporting Jewish community...which should...be a proof to the non-Jewish people of the world for the capacity of Jews to produce a virtuous and simple population...I further pointed out that Zionist aims in no way clashed with Christian desiderata in general, and Catholic desiderata in particular, in regard to the Holy Places.²⁴

Sokolow saw Pacelli on 29 April, followed by meetings with Gasparri on 1 May and Benedict XV on 4 May. Despite his optimism, buoyed by Sykes' letter, he was careful to present the Zionist program in a most moderate vein, wary of altering the Vatican's apparent change of view. With Pacelli and Gasparri, he was careful to downplay notions of a Jewish state or of Jewish political domination of Palestine.²⁵ To Benedict XV, Sokolow characterized Zionist goals as the preservation of historical Judaism with its spiritual and moral traditions, rooted in as it was in scripture. To this end, he stressed, it was not necessary to encourage large-scale Jewish immigration to the Holy Land, or to alter the existing demographic balance in Palestine. The central issue, according to Sokolow, was to "inspire world Judaism by a new model of idealism".²⁶

²⁴ Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 405.

²⁵ Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 35.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

Sokolow's Vatican visit would ultimately produce a mixed bag of messages.²⁷

Despite presenting his aims in moderate terms, Pacelli was sceptical, pressing his visitor for a more rigidly defined outline of Zionist territorial demands. On hearing Sokolow's general explanations of Zionist aims, Pacelli commented:

That is not enough. Borders must be determined, what the Holy Places are must be defined, for on this there are differences of view: some hold that they mean all the country, others- that they are only a few isolated sites. We must know in advance what you demand, in order to avoid conflicts and competition between us.²⁸

While Sokolow had intended to speak in generalities, and to present Zionism as a moderate and logical program, Pacelli continued to press for clarification on territorial specifics, indicative of his later demands for the territorial sovereignty of Jerusalem, Nazareth and Bethlehem after the establishment of Israel. Sokolow had clearly underestimated the Vatican's territorial claims, which amounted to a virtual partition of Palestine. Pacelli indicated that the reserved area, which would be off-limits to Zionist claims, was to extend well beyond the Holy Places themselves and would cover Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth and its surroundings, as well as Tiberias and Jericho. Pacelli explained, cordially though firmly, that the legal and political status of the region

²⁷ Historians Andre Kreutz and Sergio Minerbi present somewhat distinctive accounts of Sokolow's visit to the Vatican. While both outline Vatican concerns over territory in Palestine, and the pope's platitudes to Sokolow and to the Jewish plight in general, Minerbi more fully outlines the terse response Sokolow received from Pacelli, and the largely nonplussed reaction of Gasparri. Minerbi does make use of unpublished letters between Sokolow and Chaim Weizmann, sources not used by Kreutz. My account here synthesizes these sources, as well as Stein's *The Balfour Declaration*, which reprints some of Sokolow's correspondence in this period.

²⁸ Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 406. Quoted in Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, 108.

would have to be established directly through negotiations between the Holy See and the Powers, and that the Zionists would be expected to abide by their decisions.²⁹

Though Gasparri also emphasized the Vatican's territorial claims, he expressed sympathy with the plight of Jews in Russia, and with the basic aims of Zionism as presented by Sokolow. A number of topics were discussed including the general situation of the Jews and the desire for Palestine, the Holy Places and the Church's stand regarding them, and the Vatican's attitude towards Zionism. Gasparri assured Sokolow that the Vatican was not opposed to Jewish migration to Palestine, particularly if it was prompted by religious persecution elsewhere. He reminded Sokolow that the Church had condemned the persecution of both Catholics and Jews in Tsarist Russia, and that the Vatican would continue to condemn the religious persecution of Jews wherever it occurred. Though Gasparri's territorial demands differed little from those presented by Pacelli, as both were espousing the papal line, he did end the meeting with Sokolow on an affirmative note. "Naturally", he exclaimed, "we are sympathetic to [Zionism]. You must do this and we will be extremely glad if you succeed in establishing the Kingdom of Israel."³⁰

On 4 May, Sokolow was received by Benedict XV in an audience lasting nearly an hour, longer than the allotted twenty minutes. It was a sign of the pope's eagerness to receive his visitor, and an implicit nod to the growing significance of the Zionist

²⁹ Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 35.

³⁰ Minerbi, *The Vatican and Zionism*, 110. In closing, Sokolow assured Gasparri that the Zionists did not wish to establish a 'kingdom', but merely an autonomous home. The Secretary of State assured his guest that his reference was a figure of speech, but that the Zionists could count on the support of the Church: "...you may count on our sympathy. We shall be glad to see the land of Israel...You will certainly need priority in acquiring lands and for the immigrants...I wish you full success."

movement. Like Gasparri, the pope expressed sympathy with the plight of persecuted Jews, and assured his guest that the Roman Catholic Church had no objection to the immigration of Jews to Palestine. On the return of persecuted Jews to the Holy Land, in fact, the pope expressed his approval, affirming to his guest that “...it is providential. God has willed it.”³¹ The pope concluded his meeting by repeating to Sokolow, several times, “Si, si, io credo che saremo buoni vicini” (Yes, yes, I believe we will make good neighbours), suggesting that the Pope, like Gasparri, approved of a Jewish ‘kingdom’ in Palestine, so long as Roman Catholic sovereignty over religious sites and centres remained intact.³² Sokolow was sufficiently encouraged that he submitted a report to Chaim Weizmann suggesting that the Holy See’s demands were finally dovetailing with Zionist ambitions for Palestine. Weizmann, relying on the report, felt confident enough to tell a London Zionist conference on 20 May that “we have assurances from the highest Catholic circles that they will view with favour the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, and from their religious point of view see no objections to it and no reason why we should not be good neighbours.”³³

Sokolow’s visit, however, would mark the end of Vatican ambivalence towards, and apparent sanction of, political Zionism for decades to come. The events of the next several years served to harden Vatican opinion on the subject, and hearkened the return of the firmly anti-Zionist line of previous decades. On 2 November 1917, British Foreign Secretary Lord Arthur James Balfour issued the Balfour Declaration, drafted with the

³¹ *Ibid*, 111.

³² Pinchas E. Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews* (New York, 1967), 84.

³³ Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 408. Quoted in Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 34.

assistance of Weizmann, Sokolow and the British Zionist Lord Walter Rothschild.³⁴ The Declaration, which promised British support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, contained assurances of protection to non-Jewish communities in Palestine, though it ominously neglected to discuss the rights of Palestinian Arabs, who constituted nearly 90% of the population.³⁵ The Declaration, followed by General Edmund Allenby's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem on 11 December, after British troops had captured the Holy City from the control of the Ottomans, aroused latent anxieties in the highest levels of the Vatican Secretariat.

The Vatican appeared initially relieved that Jerusalem had been wrested from the Ottomans by a Christian state, and Benedict XV had long considered Great Britain the ideal power to administer Palestine after the fall of the Porte. The Vatican's semi-official organ, *L'Osservatore Romano*, went so far as to call the capture of Jerusalem a "victory for the Christian civilization"; a sentiment echoed by the Catholic press the world over.³⁶ What concerned the Holy See's bureaucrats, however, was that the Balfour Declaration appeared to disregard papal claims to sovereignty over the Holy Places, making no mention of sites considered sacrosanct by the Holy See. In fact, the Declaration appeared to sanction the eventual Zionist domination of the whole country, including the Holy Places and the indigenous Arab and Christian populations. The day after Allenby's entrance into Jerusalem, Gasparri, speaking to the French attaché in Rome, confided that

³⁴ Though secondary literature on the Balfour Declaration is fairly extensive, a splendid study of its origins and implementation is Ronald Sanders' *The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine* (New York, 1983).

³⁵ Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 36.

³⁶ On the reactions of the American Catholic Press, see Esther Yolles Feldblum's *The American Catholic Press and the Jewish State, 1917-1959* (New York, 1977), 17-28.

since the Turks had left, the status of the Holy Places would re-emerge as a source of conflict between the Christian powers, and that “Zionism, of which Mr. Balfour had just made a gift to Palestine, would not fail to engender other conflicts.”³⁷ In concluding, he added that it was “difficult to take a piece of our hearts away from the Turks in order to give it to the Zionists.”³⁸

The next five years would mark a period of intense Vatican opposition to Zionist plans for Palestine, as it appeared that a Jewish state in the territory was rapidly moving from ideology to reality. Added to this in the fall of 1917 were fears of a ‘Bolshevistic’ Zionism using the territory as a beach-head to further expansion, a concern that caused genuine disquiet in both Vatican and wider circles in the immediate aftermath of the Russian Revolution. Closer to home, the spectre of Italian Bolshevism also appeared to be looming larger, highlighted by waves of strike activity in 1919 and 1920. It was a predicament that further stoked papal fears of losing administrative sovereignty in Palestine. In the midst of such flux, the Vatican remained firmly committed to maintaining control of the Holy Places and the Catholic institutions in the territory, and maintained a vigorous antipathy to the notion of a ‘Jewish’ Palestine.

Pope Benedict XV’s pronouncements and allocutions increasingly reflected this growing apprehension. His March 1919 allocution to the College of Cardinals amounted to a forceful re-statement of Vatican policy, and was clearly intended to trumpet the Vatican’s demands to the delegates of the Paris Peace Conference, who had been deliberating since January. The Pope explained that there was:

³⁷ Charles Loiseau, “Ma mission auprès de Vatican, 1914-1918”, *Revue d’histoire diplomatique*, 74 (1960), 105.

³⁸ Sergio Minerbi, *L’Italie e le Palestine, 1914-1920* (Paris, 1970): 69.

“...one matter on which We are most specifically anxious and that is the fate of the Holy Places, on account of the special dignity and importance for which they are so venerated by every Christian. Who can ever tell the full story of all the efforts of Our Predecessors to free them from the dominion of the infidels, the heroic deeds and the bloodshed by the Christians of the West through the centuries? And now that, amid the rejoicing of all good men, they have finally returned into the hands of the Christians, Our anxiety is most keen as to the decisions which the Peace Congress at Paris is soon to take concerning them. For surely it would be a terrible grief for Us and for all the Christian faithful if infidels were placed in a privileged and prominent position; much more if those most holy sanctuaries of the Christian religion were given to the charge of non-Christians...”³⁹

The Pope’s subsequent statements on the issue reflected similar reservations on the rapidity of developments in Palestine, and the potential for Rome to lose control and influence in a territory inexorably bound to the tradition and history of the Church.

The Vatican’s stiffest challenge to Zionism in this early period came in the form of official protests issued by Gasparri to the League of Nations in and to the British government in 1920 and 1922 which severely censured the British Mandate for Palestine. The Cardinal censured the Mandate as providing the Zionists a “privileged and preponderant position relative to other nations and faiths” in the territory, creating a situation which favoured continued Jewish immigration into the territory.⁴⁰ Gasparri further critiqued the Balfour Declaration as incompatible with the spirit of the Treaty of Versailles, and with the Covenant of the League of Nations, which stated that mandates were supposed to be a “tutelage” which one power assumed over “peoples not able to

³⁹ Constantine Rackauskas, ‘The Internationalization of Jerusalem’, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 30.

⁴⁰ Pietro Cardinal Gasparri to John Francis Charles de Salis (British Minister to the Holy See), 6 March 1922, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44. Gasparri issued a similar missive to the British legation to the Holy See on 7 December 1920.

support themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world.”⁴¹ The Vatican, accurately, did not consider the Zionists in Palestine to constitute such a fragile population. Gasparri reminded both the British government and the League that the Mandate, which purported to support “the well being and development of the peoples of Palestine”, in fact was becoming “an instrument for the subordination of the indigenous population for the advantage of other nationalities.”⁴²

The Vatican also tried to stir up opposition to the Mandate from ‘Catholic’ states at the League, including France, Italy, Spain, Poland and Brazil. Though each of these powers had their own objectives for backing Rome, they all saw some utility in backing the Vatican’s stand, if only to thwart British influence in a Jewish dominated Palestine. Italy and Spain, however, were wary of French influence in Palestine should the Mandate be defeated, given France’s history as defender of the papacy. Poland, having regained independence only four years earlier, wielded little singular clout at Geneva, despite its willingness to toe the Vatican line. In the end, then, no such unified front materialized, despite Brazil’s strenuous support of the Vatican position. As a first attempt by Rome to rouse a ‘Catholic international’ in opposition to Zionist aspirations, it was a failure.⁴³ In July 1922 the League of Nations approved the Palestine Mandate, and in December it

⁴¹ Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 41-42.

⁴² Aide-Memoire to the League of Nations, 4 June 1922, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

⁴³ Though France had renewed diplomatic relations after the First World War (relations which were severed during the Dreyfus Affair), anticlericalism continued to influence the governments of Aristide Briand and Raymond Poincaré, and often precluded support for papal initiatives. In Italy, tensions between the Holy See and the state over the Roman Question (which concerned the territorial sovereignty of the Holy See), combined with an effervescent anticlericalism, also contributed to tepid relations.

officially came into force. The rebuff spoke volumes on the limits of post-Versailles Vatican diplomacy, despite the reputed support of traditional Catholic allies at Geneva.

Papal failure to achieve results based on conventional diplomacy, especially considering the nominal support of powerful allies, was particularly stinging to the Vatican, given that the fate of the Holy Land was the one issue on which it felt it had a sound and persuasive case. One certainly could argue that the Roman Catholic Church had an ancestral and legitimate stake in the question, yet this amounted to little in the end. The defeat of the Vatican in 1922 undoubtedly opened the door to closer co-operation with less traditional partners. The American Catholic Church, which to this point had played a minimal role in advocating papal policy would, given its growing financial might and reputed influence in Washington, steadily assume a more central position in the 'Catholic international' throughout the interwar period. A brief examination of the rise of the American Church, which expanded rapidly in the period before the First World War, contextualizes the growing post-1918 alliance between the Holy See and the American Catholic hierarchy.

The Rise of Roman Catholicism in the United States

The Roman Catholic Church in the United States has a presence that extends back to the Spanish missions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, with the earliest communities found in what are now the states of Florida, Georgia and Texas. French colonization in the eighteenth century expanded the Catholic presence to the Louisiana Territory districts, as well as the Great Lakes region. Freedom of worship was guaranteed by the United States Constitution of 1791, though Roman Catholics were traditionally eyed with suspicion by the Protestant majority of the early Republic. As the Catholic

population grew, so too did Protestant fears that Catholics undermined the ideals of liberty, democracy and republicanism upon which the young nation had been founded. Anti-Catholic nativism manifested itself politically in the 'Know Nothing' movement, whose leaders advocated the curbing of immigration from Catholic nations, and restricted its membership to Protestant males of Anglo-Saxon (and preferably British) lineage. Active in the mid-nineteenth century, the movement stoked fears that American Catholics pledged primary fealty to papal Rome, and that Pope Pius IX purported to subjugate the United States through mass Catholic immigration, co-ordinated by Irish-American bishops (who were of course selected by the popes). The movement was not above the use of violence to intimidate Catholics, though it did not achieve the notoriety of the Ku Klux Klan in its anti-Catholic brutality.

Despite these tensions, the Catholic population continued to swell throughout the nineteenth century. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803, and the Adams-Onís Treaty of 1819 (where Spain ceded Florida to the United States) greatly augmented the American Catholic population, numbers that were bolstered further still by waves of Irish and German immigrants throughout the century. By 1850, Roman Catholics comprised the largest single Christian denomination in the United States, numbering nearly seven million. Buttressed by heavy Catholic immigration in the last half of the century, the American Catholic population tripled, to nearly 21 million, by 1890. This pattern continued into the twentieth century, when scores of Italian and Polish immigrants were added to the continuing influx of Irish and German Catholics. The majority of these groups settled in the cities of the eastern seaboard and Great Lakes regions, such as New York, Chicago, Boston, Detroit and Philadelphia, creating a demographic concentration

in the north-east that would shape the power-structure of the Church well into the century.

The growth of the Church in the first half of the twentieth century largely mirrored the American ascent over the same period, and it experienced a post-1945 boom which mirrored that of the nation itself. The United States emerged after the Second World War as the world's most powerful nation-state, rivalled only by the Soviet Union in measures of military, economic and strategic power. While the postwar boom did not arrive in Europe for nearly fifteen years after the war, it began in the United States before the defeat of Hitler's armies, and continued unabated for nearly twenty-five years. The rise in American prestige and power after 1945 was reflected by the American Catholic Church.⁴⁴ Its leaders were hailed both for their efforts in support of the American war effort and for denouncing the evils of Soviet communism. Its parish populations were swelled by large numbers of Catholic immigrants from war-ravaged Europe, and the postwar economic upsurge greatly facilitated the church's ability to fill its coffers and raise its national profile. By the early 1950s, of the ninety million Catholics in the world, nearly a third lived in the United States. In the course of 150 years, the American Catholic population had increased from 150,000 to over 25 million, becoming the largest single denominational group in the nation, Christian or otherwise.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Several excellent surveys outline the rise of the American Catholic Church in the first half of the twentieth century. See Charles R. Morris *American Catholic: The Saints and Sinners Who Built America's Most Powerful Church* (New York, 1997), pp. 228-85; James Hennessey *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (New York, 1981), pp. 254-306.

⁴⁵ By 1963, the Catholic population of the United States would total over 43 million, a reflection of mass postwar immigration from 'Catholic' Europe. Though Protestants, in total, still outnumbered Catholics, Catholics remained the largest single denominational group by a wide margin.

Despite this growth, the relationship between Rome and the American Catholic Church did not develop without strains. To Rome, the American Church was long regarded an outpost of the faith, a missionary and immigrant Church that was kept under the auspices of the Propaganda Fide (the branch of the Roman Curia tasked with missionary work and related activities) until 1908, though apprehensions continued even after this date. While nativists feared the influence of popes on American Catholics, American bishops struggled to create an identity for the Church that was both Catholic and American. This led to acute tensions between Rome and American Catholic leaders in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Pope Leo XIII decried the constitutional separation of church and state in the United States, which denied the Catholic Church certain privileges, particularly in education and the delivery of social services, which it enjoyed in many European states. In an 1895 encyclical, he encouraged American Catholic leaders to advocate for a closer relationship between the Church and the American government, particularly in education. This brought him into conflict with powerful figures such as Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore and Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul, who believed that religious freedom and pluralism, as well as the separation of church and state, were beneficial to the Catholic Church in the United States. These men, leading figures in the so-called 'Americanist' movement, further believed it unwise to attempt to influence government to favour Catholicism over other faiths, another position which created frictions with Rome. The Pope's 1899 encyclical, *Testem Benevolentiae*, censured the 'Americanist heresy' and powerfully re-emphasized the authority of Rome in the Church, condemning what he perceived as a growing independence among the American episcopate. Gerald Fogarty contends that the tactfully

worded encyclical, while forceful, reflected the diplomatic skill of the Pope, and allowed him to defuse the Americanist dilemma without creating deeper rifts.⁴⁶

Papal concerns over the independence of the American Church, however, persisted. Leo XIII's successor, Pope Pius X, issued a 1907 encyclical, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, which condemned 'modernism' and 'relativism' in the faith, a criticism of theological trends that attempted to synthesize modern philosophical and ideological thought into Catholic doctrine. It was aimed squarely at American and European churchmen engaged in such synthesis. His 'Oath Against Modernism', released in 1910, was required to be taken by all clergy, religious superiors and seminary professors, and it mandated a strict adherence to Roman interpretations of scripture and theology. Though some chafed at such a prescribed fidelity, the Oath did manage to scuttle the creative interpretation of theology, even if the Roman curia continued to harbour suspicions of the American Church.

As late as the early 1920s, an air of mistrust towards the American Church continued to permeate the Roman curia, extending to the Pope himself. Suspicions were aroused again when, upon the United States' entry into the First World War, the American hierarchy met collectively to establish a temporary council to coordinate Catholic support for the war effort. The group's first spokesman, John J. Burke (who edited the influential *Catholic World*) received the approval of Cardinal James Gibbons (of 'Americanist' notoriety) to convene a meeting of the hierarchy in December 1917 at Washington's Catholic University of America. It was the first collective meeting of American Catholic churchmen in over three decades, and it resulted in the creation of

⁴⁶ Gerald Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1850 to 1965* (Stuttgart, 1982): 180.

National Catholic War Conference, an emergency body that was dissolved at the end of the war.⁴⁷ Gibbons had pledged Catholic support for the war in an open letter to President Woodrow Wilson in April 1917, when he powerfully outlined the collective duty of the American Church. In creating the National Catholic War Council, Gibbons reiterated the imperative of Catholic support. “The Catholic Church cannot remain an isolated factor in the nation”, he intoned to American Catholics.

The Catholic Church possesses the spiritual and moral resources which are at the command of the nation in every great crisis. Parochial, diocesan and provincial limits must be forgotten in the face of the greater tasks which burden our collective resources today. Today, as never before, the Catholic Church in the United States has an opportunity for doing a nation-wide work. No one, honestly, doubts Catholic loyalty to the principles of the American nation. And from the hierarchy to the clergy, and from the clergy to the people, the government expects an impulse towards a perfect and efficient cooperation with all its agencies in carrying the war to success.⁴⁸

American Catholics did respond resoundingly to the war effort, enlisting in numbers that exceeded their proportion of the population.⁴⁹ In pledging steadfast support for the war, and in backing that up with a collective and coordinated effort, the American bishops also earned considerable legitimacy in larger American society, and a degree of political capital in its dealings with Washington. Indeed, the function of the Council to express the collective will of the American episcopacy undoubtedly ushered in a new pattern in the relationship between the bishops and Washington- one in which the unified

⁴⁷ On the American Catholic war effort and the establishment of the National Catholic War Conference, see Elizabeth McKeown, *War and Welfare: American Catholics and World War I* (New York: Garland), 1988.

⁴⁸ *Handbook of the National Catholic War Council*, December 1918, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

⁴⁹ Though Catholics comprised about 16% of the population in 1917, their enlistment rate was nearly 21%. See *Handbook of the National Catholic War Council*, December 1918, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

demands of the Roman Catholic Church would become more difficult for policymakers and politicians to ignore.

After 1918, Burke and Gibbons led a campaign to establish a permanent bishops' council, a reflection of the rising profile of the Church in American public life, particularly given the ardent support of Catholics for the war effort. Burke envisioned the new body as having a specifically political mandate- a collective voice that could advocate on behalf of American Catholics. It was a vision that grew directly out of the experience of the wartime council. In September 1919, at a gathering of representatives from 87 of the nation's 100 dioceses at the Catholic University of America, the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC) was created as a permanent replacement of the wartime council. Archbishop Edward Hanna of San Francisco was elected as its first chairman, and it was decided that the organization would be centred around five departments- Education, Legislation, Social Action, Lay Organizations, and a Press Bureau- each headed by a bishop, coordinating the activities and advocacy of the Church on a national level. Hanna described the specifically political role of the nascent body "to deal directly with the United States government and its numerous departments on matters that affect Catholic interests."⁵⁰ Bishop Peter J. Muldoon of Rockford, Illinois, who served as the first chairman of the NCWC's administrative committee, also saw the utility of the new body to galvanize Catholic opinion in the United States, creating a more unified and forceful lobby. "We do not hesitate to say that some representative body could accomplish untold good by directing editors, teachers, and even the clergy, on

⁵⁰ 'Report of the Chairman of the NCWC Administration Committee', 23 September 1920, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 22, File 44.

general matters pertaining to the welfare of the Church”, he wrote in 1919, as the bishops met to form the NCWC. “There is an incessant demand for instructions on ‘how to act’ on many bills that are now before the legislatures of the country.”⁵¹

While many American bishops were enthusiastic about the possibilities of speaking with a unified national voice, the idea caused apprehensions in Rome, where memories of the Americanist crisis had not subsided completely. Gibbons’ involvement in the NCWC, given his role during that crisis, only added to the air of mistrust. In January 1922, the Holy See moved to suppress the NCWC, fearing that a collective voice for the American bishops could only lead to a revived and potentially more dangerous Americanism.⁵² On 6 February, Pope Pius XI succeeded Benedict XV on the papal throne, and was immediately presented with a petition from a wide swath of American bishops to save the NCWC, and was visited personally by bishop Joseph Schrembs of Cleveland, who eloquently advocated for the body’s survival. Cardinal Gasparri, who had arranged for Schrembs’ meeting with Pius XI, clearly foresaw the utility of the American hierarchy speaking with a unified voice, and imparted to the new pontiff its potential advantages. In what could only be considered a nod to the growing power of the American Church, the new pope overturned the dissolution of the new body, stipulating only that episcopal councils take place less often than every year, that attendance at NCWC meetings remain voluntary, and that its decisions not be binding to all bishops of

⁵¹ Elizabeth McKeown, “The National Bishops’ Conference: An Analysis of its Origins,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 66 (1980): 574.

⁵² The NCWC was also opposed from within the American hierarchy. Cardinals William O’Connell and Denis Dougherty, who would both later serve on the board of the CNEWA, advocated for disbandment, fearing a reduction of their own clout within the American Church. Edmund Walsh to Edward Hanna, 6 March 1922, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 22, File 44.

the American Church. The decision was a watershed moment in the relationship between the Holy See and the American hierarchy, and one that would usher in a new era of American Catholic political advocacy.

Following its brush with disbandment, the NCWC quickly established itself as the leading voice, and political lobby, of the American Catholic Church. Opportunity to test the potency of this lobby soon presented itself. The repressive anticlericalism practised by the Mexican regime of Plutarco Calles, who had won the presidency in 1924, provided the NCWC its earliest opportunity to advocate for a specifically Catholic policy response on an international issue.⁵³ A freemason, Calles initiated anticlerical legislation in June 1926 which included the outlawing of religious orders, the exiling of numerous bishops and clergy on trumped-up charges, a suspension of the civil-liberties of the clergy, and denial of the vote to the entire hierarchy. Within weeks, the situation descended into a protracted struggle between Calles' anticlerical allies and the supporters of the Church and the conservative, traditional order (the 'Cristeros').

The response of American Catholics to the Mexican crisis was indicative of the growing confidence and unity of the Church, undoubtedly aided by the existence of a national body that could express a collective will. Catholic pressure comprised of public statements issued by the bishops, cloistered diplomacy conducted by high-ranking members of the hierarchy, and a broad-based press campaign, aimed at bringing public pressure to bear on issues dear to American Catholics. In September 1926, the American

⁵³ For a fuller examination of the political campaign of American Catholics on Mexican anticlericalism, see Matthew A. Redinger's *American Catholics and the Mexican Revolution, 1924-1936* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2005).

bishops issued an open letter of sympathy to their Mexican co-religionists, assuring them that Catholics in the United States- both clergy and laymen- remained committed to their struggle for religious freedom and an end to persecutions, promising to stand with their Mexican brethren “to the end.”⁵⁴ This was followed by the bishops’ “Pastoral Letter on Mexico”, which was issued following the hierarchy’s annual meeting in December.⁵⁵ This statement drew clear parallels between the bishops’ concerns both as Catholics and as American citizens, juxtaposing the freedoms enjoyed by American Catholics with the denial of religious liberties in Calles’ Mexico. The statement was carefully worded so as not to appear to advocate for direct American intervention in the Mexican crisis, particularly military intervention, but it was clearly intended to galvanize Catholic pressure in expecting a firmer policy response from Washington.⁵⁶

A wider campaign of public awareness was initiated by the NCWC between 1926 and 1929, spearheaded by Baltimore’s archbishop, Michael Curley, who had succeeded Gibbons upon the latter’s death in 1921. Curley engaged in a direct political activism that his predecessor would have advised against. On the issue of Mexico, Curley was active on the lecture circuit, delivering public speeches that sought a wider civic awareness and

⁵⁴ Raphael Huber, ed. *Our Bishops Speak: National Pastorals and Annual Statements of the Hierarchy of the United States, 1919-1951* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1951): 188-189.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 68-70. A pastoral letter (sometimes referred to simply as a ‘pastoral’) is an open letter addressed from a bishop to his faithful, and is generally considered to represent the official position of the Roman Catholic Church on a particular matter. The pastoral issued by the bishops on Mexico was a joint-pastoral, intended to emphasize the importance of the Mexican crisis to the entire American Catholic community.

⁵⁶ The bishops emphasized that the statement “was no interposition of our influence, either as Bishops or as citizens, to reach those who possess political power anywhere on earth, and least of all in our own country, to the end that they should intervene with armed force in the internal affairs of Mexico for the protection of the Church.” Direct political pressure would, in short order, be discreetly applied by members of the hierarchy directly to figures in the American government.

engagement on Mexican religious persecutions, and demands that Washington adopt a firmer hand on Calles. Through the NCWC, he also encouraged grassroots activism on the issue, and sought to mobilize organizations such as the National Council for Catholic Men (NCCM) and the National Council for Catholic Women (NCCW) to spread awareness of the plight of their Mexican co-religionists. In August 1926, the NCWC called upon the local chapters of the NCCM and the NCCW to petition state and national leaders, including the President, the Secretary of State and congressmen, to pressure Mexico to cease its persecution of the Roman Catholic Church.⁵⁷ To expand the base of Catholic activism even further, the NCWC's administrative committee sought to form a national committee of laypersons dedicated to stimulating a moral public opinion which would prompt Washington to more definitive action, an initiative resulting in the creation of the National Committee for the Protection of Religious Rights in Mexico (NCPRRM), chaired by the prominent Catholic Judge Morgan J. O'Brien.⁵⁸ Beyond this, the NCWC's press department supplied diocesan newspapers with a steady stream of dispatches from Mexico, where the organization had stationed a number of correspondents, resulting in pervasive coverage of Mexican atrocities in the widely circulated Catholic press.⁵⁹ This campaign of awareness mounted by American Catholics was in full swing months before

⁵⁷ 'Statement of Appeal from the NCWC to NCCM and NCCW Councils', August 1926, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 5, File 44.

⁵⁸ Redinger, *American Catholics and the Mexican Revolution*, 24.

⁵⁹ Circulation figures for Catholic papers and periodicals for 1937 indicate a circulation of 2, 396, 516 for diocesan newspapers, and 4, 604, 141 for magazines. Though circulation rose in the 1930's, these figures still infer a wide readership in 1926. See 'National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service: Circulation Figures', 7 June 1937, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 21, File 2.

Pope Pius XI offered his own formal denunciation of the Mexican situation, which he offered in the November 1926 encyclical *Iniquis Afflictisque*.

The NCWC's response also included direct political advocacy. This included a letter from the organization (which of course carried the weight of the entire American episcopate) directly to President Calvin Coolidge in April 1926. The letter, which requested the President's attention to the growing atrocities committed by the Calles government, was published widely in the diocesan press in May. The most profound aspect of the NCWC's advocacy on the Mexican crisis, however, was the role it played as an intermediary between the American government, the Vatican and the Calles regime. The organization's central figure in this matter was John J. Burke, whose efforts had been instrumental in its founding.⁶⁰ Between 1927 and 1929, Burke functioned as an unofficial envoy of the Vatican to Calles, a role approved of and encouraged by Secretary of State Frank Kellogg, and Dwight Whitney Morrow, who had been named the American ambassador to Mexico in 1927. Morrow considered Burke to be a churchman of exceptional diplomatic skill and tact, and one who might be able to persuade Calles to cease his persecutions of the Church and allow for the return of the apostolic delegate, George Caruana. Significantly, this sentiment was shared by the apostolic delegate to the United States, Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, and the Vatican itself, which preferred an American churchman to conduct the delicate negotiations over its official delegate to the American Catholic Church. Before a series of meeting with Calles in 1928, Burke met with Fumasoni-Biondi to be briefed on the Vatican's demands, which included the return

⁶⁰ For an excellent synopsis of Burke's diplomacy during the Mexican crisis, see Redinger, *American Catholics and the Mexican Revolution*, 65-99.

of the exiled Caruana, as well as bishops and priests who had been spuriously ousted by regional officials. In his meetings with Calles, Burke presented the Vatican's demands first and foremost, underscoring his role as the pope's de facto envoy. His efforts were instrumental in achieving a *modus vivendi* with the Calles regime in 1929, which resulted in the lifting of a number of restrictions on the Mexican Church, and defusing a situation which had bedevilled Mexican-American and Mexican-Vatican relations.⁶¹

The lobbying efforts of the NCWC during the Mexican crisis signalled the emergence of the American Catholic Church as an organized and unified political force. Washington's reliance on Burke to conduct negotiations with Calles was emblematic of a growing relationship between the NCWC, the American bishops and leading Catholic figures on one side, and the American government on the other. The fact that Burke was able to forge a satisfactory agreement in difficult circumstances only deepened esteem for the NCWC. It was a relationship that would grow much stronger in the 1930's, when Franklin Roosevelt would develop a remarkably close relationship with American

⁶¹ Despite the 1929 agreement, frictions between the Church in Mexico and the Calles regime persisted. The election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1933 appeared to hearken a renewed isolationism in Washington, as the President was hesitant to disturb the American 'Good Neighbor Policy' which pledged non-interference in the domestic affairs of neighbouring states. Roosevelt's desires to cultivate ties with American Catholics, however, eventually drew him into the Mexican situation. In the summer of 1934 Amleto Cicognani, the new apostolic delegate to Washington, asked Burke to lobby the President for a resolution. Following an intensive campaign of public awareness coordinated by the NCWC, as well as the advocacy of Burke with the President, created the impetus for action. Though the 'Borah Resolution', which threatened Calles with sanctions and the breaking of diplomatic relations, eventually stalled in Congress, the episode marked an increasingly closer relationship between the White House and American Catholics. See Richard Gribble, "Roman Catholicism and US Foreign Policy, 1919-1935: A Clash of Policies," *Journal of Church and State* (Winter 2008: 51, 1): 92-98; David B. Woolner and Richard Kurial, eds. *FDR, The Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church in America, 1933-1945* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); George Q. Flynn, *American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency, 1932-1936* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1968).

Catholics, and when American Catholics would again press their demands on a number of international questions, including Palestine.

The NCWC's efforts on the Mexican crisis also drew the American Church closer to the Vatican. The entrustment of Burke to the negotiations with Calles might have been desired by Washington, but was consented to by Rome, a decision that spoke volumes on the Vatican's growing trust in the NCWC and the American bishops on political and diplomatic questions. In a 1927 letter to the four American cardinals, Pope Pius XI praised the "splendid zeal" of American Catholic activism on Mexico, and lauded the various elements of the American Church for "vigorously defending and furthering the cause of the Holy Roman Church."⁶² He reserved particular praise for the NCWC, and its News Service, for bringing public attention to the Mexican situation. It was a far cry from the Vatican's grave suspicions of the NCWC just five years previous, and it similarly signalled a closer working relationship between Rome and the American bishops that would strengthen further in the next decade. The broadening political and social clout of the American Catholic Church, as evidenced by activism on Mexico, and the Vatican's cognizance of the fundraising potential of the growing Church, were at the core of this rapprochement.

There were other signs in the 1920s of growing ties between the Vatican and the American Catholic Church, and as with Mexico, it involved the diplomacy of a prominent American Catholic and academic, Edmund Walsh S.J., who in 1919 had founded Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service (six years before the United States

⁶² Pope Pius XI to William O'Connell, Denis Dougherty, George Mundelein, and Patrick Hayes, 10 August 1927, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 5.

Foreign Service existed). Since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the Vatican had hoped that a *modus vivendi* could be established with Moscow. The popes had denounced atheistic communism since the mid-nineteenth century, but the events of 1917 raised fresh fears of religious persecution in Russia and an expansion of bolshevism beyond its borders. The Vatican had hoped that religious freedoms could be secured in exchange for official recognition from the pope, an important legitimising and symbolic link for the fledgling Soviet Union.⁶³ Part of the Vatican's outreach strategy was a pledge of assistance to famine-stricken regions of Russia, with a call to Catholics worldwide to raise funds for the endeavour.⁶⁴ The relief mission, however, had a practical purpose as well- it allowed the Vatican to dispatch a legion of religious to the Soviet Union, providing Rome an important source of intelligence from inside the country. As in the case of Mexico, the Vatican chose an American prelate, Walsh, to coordinate the Papal Relief Mission from Moscow.⁶⁵ Walsh, who would find later fame as a chief American consultant at the Nuremberg Trials, was uniquely suited to the role. Between 1922 and

⁶³ Fearing reprisals against the Church in Russia, the Vatican sought complete freedom of conscience both for Russian citizens and foreigners, the guarantee of both private and public practice of religion and worship, and the protection of religious property and land belonging to the Church. For a detailed examination of the Vatican's negotiations with Moscow in the 1920's, see Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917-1979* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1980), 34-111.

⁶⁴ Pius XI himself donated 2.5 million lire from the Vatican coffers (\$125,000 at the time), and nearly 2 million dollars was raised from Catholics worldwide, a considerable sum at the time. Catholic aid for Russian famine was undoubtedly a factor in fostering a functioning relationship between the Vatican and Moscow in these years. See Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican*, 43.

⁶⁵ Walsh, a Jesuit priest and academic, would achieved notoriety as an envoy and diplomat for much of his career. Like Burke, he was involved in negotiations with Calles on the Mexican crisis, and he negotiated with the Iraqi government to establish the American College at Baghdad in 1931. He would establish a reputation as a stern anti-communist. It was alleged that it was Walsh who first suggested that Senator Joseph McCarthy use the issue to gain political prominence. On Walsh's remarkable career, and particularly on his anti-communist activities, see Patrick McNamara, *A Catholic Cold War: Edmund A Walsh, S.J., and the Politics of American Anticommunism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005).

1924, he was in constant telegraphic contact with Rome, apprising the Vatican on the condition of the Catholic Church under Soviet rule. Though he was recalled from Moscow in 1924, allegedly because of his brusque (the Russians said “American”) diplomatic manner, he did manage to open up a dialogue between the Vatican and the Soviets.⁶⁶

Despite his recall, the mission initiated an increasingly intimate working relationship between the Vatican and the American Church. Upon his return from Russia, Walsh was sent by Pope Pius XI to Washington with a letter for President Warren Harding on the urgent need for Russian relief. While in the capital, Walsh was also able to secure significant amounts of Catholic aid for Russia, a development that impressed upon the Pope the financial might, as well as the fervent spirituality, of American Catholics. In 1926, after consulting with the apostolic delegate in Washington, Fumasoni-Biondi, Pius XI created the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) as a permanent umbrella organization for Vatican aid in Russia and the Near East. The fundraising capacity of American Catholics was undoubtedly the key factor in the placing of the new association in the hands of the American bishops. The example of the Vatican’s Russian relief efforts between 1921 and 1923 had clearly demonstrated to the Vatican the fiscal might of the American faithful. Of the nearly two million dollars raised by Catholics worldwide, over three quarters came from the United States.⁶⁷ The CNEWA’s charter stipulated that funds raised (though mass stipends, special collections

⁶⁶ Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican*, 49.

⁶⁷ Georgetown University Archives, Special Collections (Hereafter GUA-SC), Annual Report- Russian Papal Relief Mission (1924), Box 6, File 392.

and donations) would be forwarded directly to the Vatican's Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church, and were to be dispensed at the behest of the Pope himself. The association's 'Annual' for 1927 suggested that Catholics who joined the CNEWA pledge "a yearly minimum of one dollar", and expressed "the Holy Father's hope that every American Catholic who can possibly do so will join this association."⁶⁸ Given a Catholic population of nearly twenty million in the United States, the fundraising potential of the new association was considerable. The creation of the CNEWA had, in effect, allowed the Vatican to tap into the vast financial might of the American Church while retaining firm control of the disbursement of funds.

The new association was intended to provide Catholic assistance to Russia, Greece, Palestine and central Europe (the very regions where the Vatican feared a declining influence) and it was placed entirely in the hands of the American Catholic Church. In March 1926, the Vatican named Walsh the CNEWA's first president.⁶⁹ In September, Walsh described "the wish of the Holy Father to form a permanent society somewhat like the International Red Cross or the American Near East Relief. It will be a centralized Catholic distributing agency which can materially assist the Holy See to meet the daily demands made on the Holy Father for assistance in humanitarian works, education, and in social welfare work all over the world, as well as in distinctly religious and missionary activities."⁷⁰ Its charitable efforts occasionally extended beyond the Near

⁶⁸ 'Catholic Near East Welfare Association Annual- 1927', NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 122, File 2.

⁶⁹ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, Pietro Cardinal Gasparri to Edmund Walsh, 13 March 1926, Box 6, File 392.

⁷⁰ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, Edmund Walsh to Rev. Stephen Donahue, secretary of the Archbishop of New York, 28 September 1926, Box 6, File 392.

East, such as a \$100,000 donation made by the Holy Father, through the CNEWA, to victims of the Great Mississippi Flood of 1927, a donation which raised the domestic profile, and fundraising capability, of the association.⁷¹ Its board comprised the leading archbishops in the United States, and included cardinals William O’Connell of Boston, Denis Dougherty of Philadelphia, and Patrick Hayes of New York.⁷² In entrusting the new association to the American bishops, the Vatican expressed “complete confidence in the [American] bishops, and the Holy See leaves to them full liberty in the practical working out of this project.” On the organization of the CNEWA’s departments and functions, Cardinal Luigi Sincero, head of the Pontifical Mission for Russia, expressed that “the Holy See relies, as always, on the judgement of the American bishops.”⁷³

The placing of the CNEWA in the hands of the American episcopate was another sign of the Vatican’s growing trust in, and reliance upon, the American Catholic Church, an alliance girded by the fiscal power of the American faithful. The CNEWA, as the singular Roman Catholic aid organization for Russia and the Near East, was tasked with collecting funds from every American diocese, with proceeds placed “at the direct disposal of the Holy Father himself.”⁷⁴ Its objectives for 1927 included the

⁷¹ ‘Catholic Near East Welfare Association Annual- 1927’, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 122, File 2. The Annual implored Catholics to join the association. “Once more the Vicar of Christ is looking to our annual roll-call to maintain his works of mercy. If you are already enrolled as a member, renew your membership NOW. If, by any chance, you are not one of those who have already responded to the Holy Father’s appeal, enrol TODAY.”

⁷² GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, ‘Catholic Near East Welfare Association- Board of Directors’, April 1926, Box 6, File 391.

⁷³ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, Cardinal Luigi Sincero to Pietro Cardinal Gasparri, 10 March 1926, Box 6, File 388.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 2.

commencement of a Russian seminary at Rome, as well as aid for Russia, Greece, Syria and Palestine. A target amount of one million (American) dollars was set by the Vatican, a figure that was surpassed by June.⁷⁵ The success of the CNEWA attracted attention beyond Catholic circles. Herbert Hoover, who at this time served as Secretary of Commerce, lauded the work of American Catholics in this sphere, connecting the alleviation of famine and disease to the combating of bolshevism and other anti-democratic forces. A number of mainstream, secular newspapers echoed Hoover's sentiments.⁷⁶

The generosity of American Catholics, as well as the stalwart leadership of the American episcopate and clergy, did not go unrecognized by the Vatican. In June 1927, Pius XI praised the American Church, which had "once more demonstrated its traditional loyalty to this Holy See, manifested in their spirit of generosity."⁷⁷ In the same year, he credited them further with underwriting the Vatican's program for the "safeguarding of international peace through international understanding," praising the "great, permanently organized body of American Catholics forming a solid phalanx" behind him, "unfailing in their loyalty and devotion."⁷⁸ In October 1928, he again extolled the leadership of the

⁷⁵ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, 31 May 1927, Box 6, File 391. The appeal, which was launched on 23 January, achieved its target in just four months. The leading archdioceses and dioceses, by contribution, were New York (\$96, 074), Philadelphia (\$90, 256), Boston (\$58, 449), Springfield (\$53, 649) and Hartford (\$46, 227), underscoring the power and fundraising capacity of the Church in the north-east.

⁷⁶ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, 'Press Comment', 1 January 1927, File 6, Box 388. Papers such as the *Evening Globe* (Boston), *Democrat* (Waterbury), *Daily American Tribune* (Dubuque), and the *Telegram* (Worcester) commented favourably on the work of the CNEWA.

⁷⁷ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, 'Pope Pius XI to the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States', 30 July 1927, Box 6, File 392.

⁷⁸ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, 'The Papal Annual: A Review of the International Welfare Activities of the Holy See', January 1928, Box 6, File 392.

American bishops in their development of the CNEWA. “We are indebted to you, Venerable Brothers,” he exclaimed, “in who the sacred hierarchy of the United States finds its personification, and without whom nothing ever could or can now be accomplished.”⁷⁹ He further praised the American Church for “the substantial financial help given Us in support of two works of religion which are the object of intense daily, and, ...harrowing concern of Our Apostolic ministry.”⁸⁰ The first of these were funds for the Propaganda Fide, the Vatican office tasked with carrying the faith to non-Catholic regions and states. The second “work” was funds for the Roman Catholic Church in Palestine, where the Vatican clearly sought to bolster its institutional presence in the midst rising Arab-Jewish tensions. The Pope urged the bishops to keep in mind “that East which once was a most flourishing garden of the Catholic Church and which later, separated, or rather torn, from the Church, fell into so wretched a plight, spiritual and material as well; that East which now as never before fills Us with hopes so strong and so sweet of seeing her return to the One Fold, but which for this very reason is more than ever beset and tempted by propaganda (only too well equipped with worldly resources of every kind) hostile to Christ and His Church.”⁸¹ As early as 1928, then, it was clear that American Catholic money was supporting the Roman Catholic institutional presence in Palestine, a territory now firmly on the radar of the Vatican secretariat. Though the Vatican would ultimately fail in its efforts to normalize relations with Moscow, the

⁷⁹ GUA-SC, Edmund Walsh Papers, ‘Pope Pius XI to the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States’, 23 October 1928, Box 6, File 391.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

CNEWA would remain central to Rome's outreach in the Near East, and would play a vital role in postwar Palestine.

Storm-Clouds Over Europe: The Vatican and American Catholics Move Closer

Increasing diplomatic isolation in Europe was another factor drawing the Vatican closer to both the American Catholic Church and Washington in the later 1920's. The decade, however, had started with a sense of optimism. Following its rebuff from participating in the Versailles negotiations, the Vatican spent much of the 1920's attempting to solidify its relations with Europe's secular governments. Vatican criticisms of the Versailles Treaty, mainly that it was an arbitrary and punitive settlement bound to create future discord, created strains between the papacy and the victorious powers, particularly France. In Vatican circles, German weakness was considered a portent to further unrest, and Gasparri sought a return to the 'balance of power' that had preserved European stability for much of the nineteenth century. He still sought, however, to normalize relations with France, the 'eldest daughter of the Church', which had been severed two decades previous over tensions in church-state relations and anticlericalism. Gasparri engaged in careful diplomacy with France, and instructed apostolic delegates in London, Brussels, Madrid and Rome to counsel moderation on Paris. This strategy of outreach, which included the canonization of Joan of Arc in 1920, led to the re-establishment of Franco-Vatican relations in 1921.⁸²

The signing of the Locarno Treaties in 1925 was another source of optimism for the Holy See. The treaties, considered a keystone to political and economic recovery at

⁸² Stewart A. Stehlin, "The Emergence of a New Vatican Diplomacy during the Great War and its Aftermath", in Kent, Pollard, *Papal Diplomacy in the Modern Age*, 79.

the time of their signing, did create a genuine atmosphere of optimism among European statesmen for the remainder of the decade.⁸³ Under its terms, Germany was re-integrated into the European states system, and the powers entered into a mutual non-aggression pact. In addition, Germany was admitted to the League of Nations, and a withdrawal of Allied troops from the Rhineland was ordered. The Vatican regarded the Locarno as a sensible revision of the lopsided Versailles Treaty, and Gasparri expressed a cautious optimism to foreign diplomats that European relations were finally on a stable course.

In the afterglow of Locarno, the Vatican set about securing its legal position with a number of European governments through the concordat, a church-state agreement which preserved the traditional social and civic privileges of the Roman Catholic Church, as well as securing tax-exempt status for its considerable land and property holdings. The agreements furnished mutual benefits, providing lay governments an orderly relationship with both the Church and their Catholic populations (which, in many cases, comprised the majority). In a short span, the Holy See completed concordats with Latvia (1922), Poland (1925), Lithuania (1927), Romania (1927) and the German states of Rhineland, Westphalia and Saarland (1929). The German concordats paved the way for the *Reichskonkordat* (1933), an agreement which appeared to normalize relations between the Holy See and Nazi Germany. The most important negotiations completed by the Holy See in these years, however, were the Lateran Agreements of February 1929, which offered Italian recognition of the sovereignty of the pope in the Vatican City, in return for

⁸³ A large historiography exists on European interwar diplomacy, with historians coming to regard peace and security in the 1920s as largely illusory. Though structures were implemented to prevent future conflict, they could not withstand the stridency of the fascist regimes. For a cogent analysis of this chimerical peace, see Sally Marks, *The Illusion of Peace: International Relations in Europe, 1918-1933* (New York: Palgrave, 2003).

papal recognition of the Kingdom of Italy (and Mussolini's Fascist regime), and the exchange of ambassadors. In addition, the agreement provided an indemnity paid to the Holy See to settle accounts outstanding since Italian unification in 1860, and provided guarantees on the position of the Church in Italian society.⁸⁴ The agreements appeared to settle, once and for all, the tensions between the popes and the Italian state (the 'Roman Question') which had bedevilled this relationship for six decades. By the end of 1929, then, it appeared that the Holy See had buttressed its position with a number of important European states, and had re-established its position as an independent, neutral and apolitical 'moral arbiter' in continental affairs.

The optimism of the mid-to-late 1920's, however, would prove to be short lived, not only for the Holy See but for the wider continent. The economic crash of 1929 strained pre-existing political fault-lines, and renewed the Vatican's diplomatic anxieties. Gasparri's cherished 'balance of power', which he had advocated since 1919, and which created for the Holy See the political space to exercise influence, eroded rapidly in the 1930's. Just as it appeared that the papacy had re-integrated itself into the postwar states system, economic deterioration and political crises, combined with the rising hostility of totalitarian regimes in Italy and Germany, once again placed the Vatican in a precarious

⁸⁴ See Peter C. Kent, *The Pope and the Duce: The International Impact of the Lateran Agreements* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 2. On the domestic impact of the Lateran Accords, see D.A. Binchy, *Church and State in Fascist Italy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Francesco Margiotta Broglio, *Italia e Santa Sede dalla grande Guerra alla conciliazione* (Naples: Moroni, 1966). For Mussolini, the Accords cemented his seizure of power, completing the matrix of institutional structures supporting his regime. He based his dictatorship on a series of compromises with the traditional institutions of the Italian state: the monarchy, the armed forces, the industrial community and the Church. The Lateran Accords completed this process, putting to rest the longest standing grievance of Italian unification, and providing Mussolini and the Fascist state an enhanced international prestige. See Adrian Lyttleton, *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy, 1919-1929* (London: Scribners, 1973), 429-432.

position. As the organizational centre of a universal church which had to deal with the particular needs of national groups, it had always been subject to pressure from all sides and factions, representing varied individual and state interests.⁸⁵ The deterioration of European affairs after 1930 would create for the Vatican, however, an increasingly challenging balancing act.

Despite completing a concordat with the Nazi government in 1933, relations between Rome and the new regime quickly deteriorated. Though Gasparri and his under-secretary had severe doubts about Nazi sincerity at the signing of the agreement, fears of bolshevism and a paucity of options led to its completion. True to form, Berlin disregarded most elements of the accord, and the Roman Catholic Church in Germany was offered little protection against Nazi arrogance and ruthlessness. From the early 1930's forward, Pius XI made no secret of his disdain for the Nazi state, despite papal expectations of a functioning *modus vivendi* with the Nazi state. It was a position that did little to enhance Vatican-German relations.⁸⁶ Rome's relationship with Fascist Italy held up somewhat better, as the Lateran Accords had appeared to create a genuine rapprochement, according the Church the social and political latitude to pursue its mission. Cooperation between the Vatican and the regime appeared to reach an apex in 1935, when Italian priests and bishops lent active support to the Italian invasion of

⁸⁵ Kent, Pollard, *Papal Diplomacy in the Modern Age*, 84.

⁸⁶ Scholarship on pre-war relations between the Vatican and Nazi Germany has received considerably less attention than wartime relations. See, for example, Hubert Wolf, *Pope and Devil: The Vatican's Archives and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2010); Gunther Lewy, *The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964); Anthony Rhodes, *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974); Peter C. Kent, "A Tale of Two Popes: Pius XI, Pius XII and the Rome-Berlin Axis", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 23,4 (October 1988): 589-608.

Abyssinia during the Italo-Ethiopian War.⁸⁷ From this point forward, however, Vatican-Italian relations began to regress. The creation of the Rome-Berlin Axis in 1936, which drew Italy firmly into the German orbit, created strains between Pius XI and Mussolini which would intensify as the Italian dictator moved closer to his German counterpart.⁸⁸ Mussolini's adoption of anti-Semitic racial laws in July 1938 further strained relations between Pius XI and the Fascist state.

It was in the midst of such political volatility, and diplomatic isolation, that the Vatican began to cultivate ever closer connections both to the American government and the American Catholic Church. Though the entire world had been shaken by the financial crash of 1929, American political structures remained remarkably resilient and stable, attributes admired and sought by the papacy. Alfred E. Smith's 1928 run for the presidency, while ultimately ending in failure, illustrated the extent to which Roman Catholics could penetrate American political life, even if nativist, anti-Catholic blocs remained. And the effective diplomacy of the NCWC on the Mexican crisis, as well as the administrative and fundraising acumen of the CNEWA, had revealed the potential, both political and financial, of the American bishops. As European political instability deepened, and as it became increasingly manifest that the United States had supplanted Britain and as the world's most stable and powerful democracy, Vatican attentions became increasingly focused on Washington and the American Church.

⁸⁷ Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pius XII*, 26.

⁸⁸ See Kent, "A Tale of Two Popes".

In the 1930's, a number of American Catholic leaders rose to prominence. The principal national figure among the American bishops was Archbishop Francis Spellman of New York, a close associate of Eugenio Pacelli (who would become Pope Pius XII in 1939), and friend of Presidents from Roosevelt to Johnson.⁸⁹ Spellman, who had studied for the priesthood in Rome, had served in 1925 as the first American attaché to the Vatican secretariat of state, where he became familiar with leading figures of the secretariat, including Pope Pius XI, Gasparri and Domenico Tardini, who would later advise Pius XII on political matters and serve as secretary of state to Pope John XXIII. In 1927, Spellman's long and close friendship to Pacelli began during a visit to Germany, where the future pope was serving as apostolic nuncio. This relationship, which would strengthen over the 1930's and endure throughout Pacelli's pontificate, would guarantee Spellman, and by extension the American Church, an important voice in the formulation of Vatican policy both during and after the war. In 1939, the Pope would move Spellman from Boston (where he served as auxiliary bishop), to New York, where he was named archbishop of the nation's preeminent archdiocese. In the consistory of 1946, Pius XII would make Spellman a cardinal, cementing his position as the foremost leader in American Catholicism.

Other important national figures included Chicago's Archbishop George Mundelein, a close associate of Roosevelt and key political ally, credited with delivering the Catholic vote to the Democrats in the 1933 and 1936 federal elections. Mundelein's early and unequivocal support of the New Deal firmed up Catholic support for Roosevelt

⁸⁹ Hennessey, *American Catholics*, 285. On Spellman's life and career, see James Cooney's *The American Pope: The Life and Times of Francis Cardinal Spellman* (New York, 1984); Robert I. Gannon, *The Cardinal Spellman Story* (New York, 1962); Warren Steibel, *Cardinal Spellman: The Man* (New York, 1966).

in the heavily Catholic mid-west, and his public praise of the Roosevelt administration's action on Mexico further cemented Catholic approval. Between 1932 and the cardinal's death in 1939, Roosevelt could count on the political support of Mundelein who, by his very association with the president, had become the most visible figure in American Catholicism. The pair would meet fourteen times in this period, and they shared an active and frequent correspondence. That no other religious figure would share such a relationship with Roosevelt was emblematic of the rapidly growing prestige of American Catholicism.

Archbishop Samuel Stritch, who succeeded Mundelein in 1939, and who was also raised to the Sacred College by Pius XII in 1946, also maintained a close relationship with Roosevelt throughout the 1930's, as did Boston's Cardinal William Henry O'Connell. O'Connell was succeeded in 1944 by Richard J. Cushing, who would advocate for the Vatican on the Palestine question after 1945, and who later achieved national renown as the churchman to deliver the invocation at John F. Kennedy's 1960 inauguration.⁹⁰ Other key figures included Detroit's Edward Francis Mooney, a former chairman of the NCWC, and archbishops John F. O'Hara of Philadelphia, Michael J. Curley of Baltimore, Patrick O'Boyle of Washington and Timothy McNicholas of Cincinnati, all of whom cultivated important political ties in the postwar years. Howard Carroll, who served as the General Secretary of the NCWC from 1944 to 1957, and Mgr. Thomas McMahon, who served as the acting head of the CNEWA after 1943, would emerge as similarly influential figures in the postwar American Catholic firmament, particularly on the question of Palestine.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*

The growth of the American Catholic Church, and the expansion of its influence in the postwar period, did not escape the attention of the Vatican. From the early 1930's, officials in the Vatican secretariat had divined the growing importance of the American Church within the international Roman Catholic communion. Later in the decade, the British Minister at the Vatican, Francis D'Arcy Osborne, reflected that "the steady increase of the Catholic populations of the New World, compared with the relative stability of that of the old, has during the last quarter of a century made the Vatican less dependent than formerly on Europe, and more anxious to adopt a democratic attitude in conformity with the spirit of America, to which the papacy may one day have to look for its main support, financial as well as spiritual".⁹¹

The foresighted Pope Pius XI, preparing Pacelli for the papal throne, had sent him to the United States in 1936 to acquaint him personally with the leading figures of the American Church.⁹² It was Spellman who co-ordinated Pacelli's 1936 visit, the first ever of a future pope to the United States.⁹³ The visit, along with strengthening the bond between Rome and American Catholic leaders, also highlighted the pre-eminence of

⁹¹ Thomas E. Hachey, ed. *Anglo-Vatican Relations, 1914-1939: Confidential Annual Reports of the British Ministers to the Holy See* (Boston, 1972), 399.

⁹² Andrej Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: The Struggle for the Holy Land* (Westport, 1990), 82. Pacelli's tour served American purposes as well, by helping to censor the anti-Roosevelt 'radio-priest', Father Charles Coughlin. It also gave Pacelli the opportunity to propose diplomatic relations between Washington and the Vatican, a sign that the papacy could no longer depend solely on its European neighbours, particularly as the clouds of war gathered over the continent. His itinerary included a two-week tour of the nation, a stay in New York City as the guest of Myron C. Taylor (Roosevelt's future 'personal representative' to the Holy See) and, finally, a luncheon with the recently re-elected Roosevelt at Hyde Park. For a fuller treatment of the Pacelli visit, see Leon Hutton, "The Future Pope Comes to America: Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli's Visit to the United States", *US Catholic Historian*, (Vol. 24, No. 2: Spring 2006), 109-130.

⁹³ On the Pacelli visit, see Cooney, *The American Pope*, 64-70; Leon Hutton, "The Future Pope Comes to America: Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli's Visit to the United States", *US Catholic Historian* (24:2, Spring 2006), 109-130.

Spellman in the American Church. Several members of the American hierarchy, including Mundelein, O'Connell and Hayes, were vexed by Spellman's close control of Pacelli's visit, a situation undoubtedly facilitated by his friendship with Pacelli and his Roman contacts. Privately, John Burke expressed frustrations over Spellman's diffidence towards the NCWC during Pacelli's tour, and criticized the bishop's treatment of Amleto Cicognani, the apostolic delegate, who had been frustrated in his own efforts to manage Pacelli's agenda.⁹⁴ If the tour signalled Spellman's rising status in the American Church, it also signalled the beginning of intense Vatican efforts to develop closer ties to the American government. Though the visit was classified as unofficial by the Holy See, the visit was intended to draw the nominal allies closer together. Pacelli's agenda was threefold: to consult with Catholic leaders and the American government on official Vatican-American diplomatic relations; to seek American co-operation in the Vatican's various anti-communist endeavours; and to muzzle Father Charles Coughlin, the anti-Roosevelt 'radio priest' who had become a dangerous nuisance both to Washington and Rome.⁹⁵ The tour, which was covered extensively by the mainstream secular press, included meetings both with Catholic leaders and government officials. Through Joseph P. Kennedy, a prominent Catholic and a major contributor to Roosevelt's campaign chest, Spellman arranged a meeting between Pacelli and Roosevelt at Hyde Park on 5

⁹⁴ John J. Burke to Edward Mooney, 26 October 1936, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 152, File 27. Burke considered Spellman's disregard for the NCWC a rebuff not to the organization alone, but to the bishops it represented- in effect a snub of the American hierarchy itself.

⁹⁵ On the controversial career of the anti-Semitic 'radio priest', Father Charles Coughlin, see Sheldon Marcus, *Father Coughlin: The Tumultuous Life of the Priest of the Little Flower* (Boston, 1973); see also Mary Christine Athans' *The Coughlin-Fahey Connection: Father Charles E. Coughlin, Father Denis Fahey and Religious anti-Semitism in the United States, 1938-1954* (New York, 1991).

November, where diplomatic relations, Coughlin, and closer Vatican-American co-operation were discussed.⁹⁶

Spellman was the key figure in the strengthening link between Rome and the American Church from the interwar period forward. He had worked with Pacelli in the Vatican Secretariat of State in the early 1930's, where the two became close friends and Spellman became Pacelli's protégé.⁹⁷ After becoming auxiliary bishop of Boston in 1932, Spellman continued to cultivate his Roman contacts, and it was he who made arrangements for Pacelli's 1936 tour. Throughout the 1930's Spellman, in addition to his close relationship with Rome, also developed strong ties with Roosevelt. Spellman, along with Cardinal George Mundelein of Chicago, actively supported the New Deal, and both held spiritual authority and political sway in strongholds of Democratic Party membership.⁹⁸ Spellman also cultivated a close political relationship with Joseph Kennedy, a fellow Bostonian, which opened additional avenues for the ambitious prelate. From 1933 to 1936, Spellman discussed the virtues of formal Vatican-American diplomatic ties with both Kennedy and James Roosevelt, the President's son, a message he would later take to the President himself during Pacelli's visit.

⁹⁶ Francis Spellman to John Burke, 8 November 1936, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 152, File 29.

⁹⁷ Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII: The Roman Catholic Church and the Division of Europe, 1943-1950* (Montreal, 2002), 64.

⁹⁸ George Q. Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism: Catholics and American Diplomacy, 1937-1945* (Westport, 1976), 99.

“The Mangiest, Scabbiest Cat Ever”: The American Catholic Political Lobby Matures

The political activism of the American Church, honed during the Mexican crisis, continued to mature through the 1930's. Emboldened by an increasingly potent collective voice, American Catholics adopted distinct positions on several international crises of the decade, most notably on the Italo-Ethiopian War and the Spanish Civil War.

Significantly, these stances echoed the Vatican's quite closely, and stood in distinct contrast to the position of the federal government and mainstream Jewish and Protestant groups, highlighting the influence of papal Rome on the political mind, and advocacy, of American Catholics. Though the League of Nations had firmly denounced Italy's unprovoked attack on Abyssinia in October 1935, the Vatican issued only ambiguous reactions, reluctant to criticize Mussolini's policies too directly, and anxious to maintain an apolitical neutralism, particularly within the stormy context of European politics.⁹⁹

Though not unanimous, the response American Catholics to Italian aggression was similarly ambiguous.¹⁰⁰ Many American Catholics continued to view Mussolini with a mixture of curiosity and admiration, regarding him as the defender of the Church and its values in Europe, and as a committed anti-communist, a theme that was treated obsessively in the American diocesan press. The vague reactions of American Catholic

⁹⁹ Though the Vatican's response remained muted, several leading Italian bishops justified and indeed praised the invasion as advancing the spread of Christianity in Africa and beyond. Just days after the initial invasion, the bishop of Cremona, consecrating a number of regimental flags, declared the "blessing of God upon these soldiers who, on African soil, will conquer new and fertile lands for the Italian genius, thereby bringing to them Roman and Christian culture. May Italy once again stand as the Christian mentor to the whole world."

¹⁰⁰ Black Catholics in the United States were decidedly less conflicted over the Italian-Ethiopian conflict than were their white co-religionists, with many supporting Protestant and Jewish organized Ethiopian relief efforts. The episode, in fact, created a lasting strain between black Catholics and the American Catholic Church.

leaders strained relations between Catholics on the one hand, and Protestants and Jews on the other, who had roundly criticized Italian actions as a clear breach of international law. Particularly conspicuous was the lack of Catholic endorsement for the various American aid agencies established for Ethiopia, many formed by mainstream Protestant and Jewish organizations, creating interdenominational frictions that would soon be heightened over the question of Palestine.¹⁰¹

Though Roosevelt and Cordell Hull desired a stricter and more effective embargo policy on Italy, one that actually curtailed the Italian war effort, American Catholics, particularly Italian-Americans, opposed vehemently, citing the unjustness of an embargo policy that treated the belligerents unequally.¹⁰² The NCWC argued that a revised embargo policy compromised American neutrality, and would draw the United States dangerously closer to intervention, a position that the American Catholic press touted widely. The persistence of the Catholic lobby hindered Roosevelt's implementation of a stronger embargo, and weakened the president's suggestion of a 'moral embargo' against the Fascist state. Much as in the case of Mexico, American Catholic positions on the Italo-Ethiopian War complicated American policymaking efforts. That Roosevelt

¹⁰¹ Groups such as 'American Aid for Ethiopia' were quickly formed in response to the Italian invasion, which called for a stricter American embargo against Italy, and a firmer official censure of Fascist aggression. Its executive committee was comprised of members of the (Protestant) Federal Council of Churches, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the African Welfare Committee of the Federal Council of Churches. Neither Catholic organizations nor individual Catholic leaders were included in the membership list of this organization, which was the largest and most prominent of the Ethiopian relief committees. See 'Questions Concerning War and Peace', January 1936, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 42, File 13.

¹⁰² The Neutrality Act, as it stood, banned the sale of finished war products to belligerents, but it did not deny them access to strategic materials, such as oil, cotton and copper, which could still be purchased at prewar levels. As it stood, Italian access to strategic materials boosted its war efforts against feudal Abyssinia, exposing American neutrality as an aid to Italy. For a succinct account of the Italian-American campaign against embargo revision, see Leo V. Kanawada, *Franklin D. Roosevelt's Diplomacy and American Catholics, Italians and Jews* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1982): 75-92.

ultimately abandoned a more comprehensive embargo, despite support from Protestant and Jewish groups, was further evidence of the growing influence of American Catholics on Washington's policy considerations.

The Spanish Civil War similarly served to highlight the increasing stridency of American Catholic activism on international questions, as well as the clear positional parallels between the Vatican and the American Church. Upon the outbreak of hostilities in Spain, the Roosevelt administration sought, above all else, to avoid entanglement in what was regarded as a European civil war, a policy that fit neatly into the isolationism of the New Deal. Over time, however, a steadfast isolationism became more difficult to maintain, particularly given the clear evidence of Nazi and Fascist assistance to General Francisco Franco's Nationalist forces, and in the face of growing atrocities on both sides.

Though few Americans advocated direct intervention in the Spanish conflict, a wide range of liberal voices, which included many mainstream Protestant and Jewish groups, advocated for the lifting, or at least the revision of, the American embargo on arms shipments to Spain, a barrier which they claimed only aided Franco's Nationalists. A number of prominent Protestant and Jewish figures spoke out on the urgent need for embargo revision, including theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, Albert Einstein (then at Princeton University), and a cross-section of literary, entertainment and academic figures.¹⁰³ The various proponents of embargo revision appeared to secure a victory in January 1938, when over sixty congressmen issued a statement expressing solidarity with the Spanish *Cortez* (Legislature) as a stirring example to the world in its fight to protect

¹⁰³ 'Press Release', Franklin Folsom (Executive Secretary, League of American Writers), 9 October 1937, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 22, File 50.

democracy, a development which appeared to portend the lifting of Washington's embargo.¹⁰⁴

Liberal opposition to the Spanish embargo was counterbalanced by a majority of American Catholic leaders. Though few American Catholics advocated intervention, most were horrified at the atrocities perpetrated against Spanish religious by Republican Loyalists, and regarded Franco as a defender of religious freedom (even if many Catholics were dubious of his political legitimacy). Michael J. Ready, General Secretary of the NCWC, responded directly to the congressional statement of support for the Republicans with an open letter, carried widely in the Catholic press, and sent directly to the State Department, which expressed "shock and amazement" that democratically elected American congressmen could so cavalierly support an un-democratic, repressive and anti-clerical regime as the Spanish Republicans.¹⁰⁵ Ready's letter followed the statement of the American bishops, issued following their annual meeting in November 1937, expressing support and sympathy for their Spanish co-religionists, a statement bolstered by a wave of reportage in the Catholic press highlighting the rape of nuns, the shooting of bishops, and the burning of churches.¹⁰⁶ In addition, a number of Catholic

¹⁰⁴ See George Q. Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism*, 40.

¹⁰⁵ 'Statement of the Right Rev. Monsignor Michael J. Ready, General Secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, on the "good will" message of certain Senators and Congressmen to the Barcelona Spanish regime.' 31 January 1938, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 50. Ready expressed indignation that the "duly elected representatives of our American democracy, sworn to uphold the right of religious liberty, could place themselves on record as sympathetic with a government which has absolutely proscribed the exercise of religion in the territory which it governs."

¹⁰⁶ The American bishops' statement was issued in support of the Spanish bishops' statement of July 1937, which amounted to a global appeal for support in the face of Republican anticlericalism. See 'Joint Letter of the Spanish Bishops to the Bishops of the Whole World Concerning the War in Spain', 1 July 1937, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 22, File 50.

organizations, at the suggestion of the NCWC, passed resolutions condemning the anticlericalism of the Barcelona government, forwarding them to key figures in Washington, including Roosevelt and Hull.¹⁰⁷ In December 1938, the National Council of Catholic Men (NCCM) created the “Keep the Spanish Embargo Committee”, which constituted another flank in American Catholic efforts to shape Washington’s policy on Spain.

The intensity of American Catholic political pressure on maintaining the Spanish embargo did not go unnoticed in Washington. In a May 1938 conversation with Roosevelt, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes noted that the President feared that the lifting of the embargo “might have meant the loss of every single Catholic vote next fall,” a predicament that made the Democrats justifiably wary.¹⁰⁸ Though Ickes later quipped in his diary that Catholic political pressure was “the mangiest, scabbiest cat ever”, the administration was clearly cognizant of the need to strategically appease it.¹⁰⁹ George Q. Flynn contends that although Catholic pressure did not sway the administration’s decision on the Spanish embargo (and only reinforced it), the episode endowed the American Catholic Church with a reputation for political power it did not fully merit.¹¹⁰ Nonetheless, the fight to maintain the embargo (and the apparent success of the Catholic

¹⁰⁷ Resolutions were issued by the National Council of Catholic Men (NCCM), the National Council of Catholic Women (NCCM), the Knights of Columbus, and the Catholic Daughters of America (CDA), who issued a telegram directly to Hull demanding that the United States formally protest against religious persecution in Spain. In addition, Denis Cardinal Dougherty, Archbishop of Philadelphia, instructed his parishioners to petition Congress to keep the embargo, a plea that resulted in 10,000 telegrams arriving on Capitol Hill in 2 weeks.

¹⁰⁸ Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism*, 43.

¹⁰⁹ Fred Israel, *Nevada’s Key Pittman* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963): 157.

¹¹⁰ See Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism*, 47-55.

lobby), emboldened the NCWC's political lobby, and created the impression in non-Catholic circles (and particularly among mainstream Protestant and Jewish groups), that Catholics held a special sway in Washington. In fifteen short years, the American Catholic Church, organized through the NCWC, had emerged as a cogent and unified voice in American public and political affairs, a powerful advocate of Vatican interests within the American body politic.

As the political voice of the American Church grew more strident in the later 1930s, so too did Spellman's profile also continued to rise. Upon the outbreak of war, he led American-Catholic support for the war effort, both in his vociferous support for American entry into the war, and in his capacity as the head of the American Catholic military chaplaincy. As archbishop of New York, Spellman was also named military bishop of the United States, a position that took him to Rome several times during the war.¹¹¹ Because of his close relationship with Pacelli, Spellman became a primary broker in the relationship between Washington and the Vatican during the war years. One of Spellman's key wartime duties had been to administer Vatican funds that had been shipped out of Europe and deposited into American banks for the duration of the war, evidence of the trust and esteem the Pope held for his point-man in the American Church. As the Cold War dawned, Spellman had proven his value to the Vatican as an effective financial manager, diplomat and administrator and was the only senior churchman,

¹¹¹ Kent, *The Lonely Cold War*, 64.

contends historian Gerald Fogarty, whom the pope regarded as a personal and trusted friend.¹¹²

So highly esteemed was Spellman in Roman circles that there was speculation, as the war drew to a close, that the archbishop of New York would be named the Vatican's secretary of state, a position made vacant upon the death of Cardinal Luigi Maglione in August of 1944. The pope, cognizant of Spellman's influence with the American government and Catholic hierarchy, and aware of the potential power of both in the postwar world, offered him the position at the end of September. Spellman asked for time to defer his decision until the war's end, at which point he declined the offer, arguing that he would be of more use to Pius XII as archbishop of New York than as secretary of state.¹¹³ Though Spellman had been offered the second most prestigious position in the Vatican, a job Pacelli himself had held before becoming pope, he feared the constraints of working too closely with Pius XII. On several foreign questions, the pope had consulted more extensively with Spellman than with Maglione, and there was no guarantee he would not turn to someone else in the future.¹¹⁴ Upon reflection, Spellman concluded that as archbishop of New York, he could operate free of Vatican strictures, forcing Pius XII to rely on him as a political lynch-pin between Rome and Washington. His decision to

¹¹² *Ibid.* For a fuller examination of Spellman's wartime role as a conduit for Vatican-American relations during the Second World War, see Gerald P. Fogarty's *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy From 1870 to 1965* (Wilmington, 1985), 259-312.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹¹⁴ Though Spellman ultimately rebuffed Pius' offer, he was careful not to spark a row between himself and the pope. He later informed friends that he had never wanted the job as secretary of state, but that he had diplomatically informed Pacelli that he was indifferent to remaining in the United States, and that he "would leave New York, family or anything if the Holy Father though [he] could serve in any place for the church". See John Cooney, *The American Pope: The Life and Times of Francis Cardinal Spellman*, (New York, 1984), 140-143.

remain in the United States, given his acute political instincts, and given Rome's increasing desire to draw talented Americans into the Secretariat, spoke volumes on the growing prestige and influence of the postwar American Church in the international Roman Catholic firmament.

Vatican hopes for a direct envoy with the American government, which Spellman had advocated for some time, were realized in January of 1940, when Roosevelt named Myron Taylor, former chairman of the United States Steel Corporation, as his 'personal representative' to the Holy See. Negotiations for such a representative had been ongoing since Pacelli's visit. Roosevelt had hoped that Mundelein would be his point-man for negotiations with Rome, but the Cardinal's death in October 1939 forced the president to turn to Spellman, with whom he shared a much less intimate association. Earlier in the same year, Spellman had been installed as the archbishop of New York following the death of Cardinal Hayes. The appointment itself was a sign of Spellman's favour in Vatican circles, and of the newly elected Pius XII's desire, as Europe slid into war, to draw closer to the American government. The mercurial rise of Spellman, who would maintain a close relationship both to Roosevelt and Pius XII, combined with the establishment of a direct presidential envoy to the pope, and the increasing political stridency of the NCWC, served to draw together the Vatican, the American Church and the American government through the war years and beyond. It was a strategic and ideological alliance that would be tested by several international developments, including the rapid postwar changes in Palestine.

The Vatican, American Catholics and Political Zionism, 1922-1939

Throughout the interwar period, Vatican attitudes on political Zionism remained unfavourable, becoming more hardened in the 1930's, as increased Jewish immigration to Palestine lent a renewed urgency to the question of Jewish statehood. Despite the strains that existed between the Vatican and American bishops in the early 1920's, American Catholic attitudes towards Zionism mirrored Rome's quite closely, evidence of an analogous transnational outlook that appeared to supersede other tensions. An examination of the American Catholic press over this period illuminates these parallels. Reflecting Vatican sentiment, American Catholic journals regarded the 1917 capture of Jerusalem by General Allenby a positive development, delivering the holy city from the clutches of Muslim rule into the hands of a Christian power. Scepticism of Zionism, however, remained a prominent theme, and was evinced almost immediately. Chicago's Catholic diocesan paper, the *New World*, expressed optimism in December 1917 that "whatever fate awaits the Holy Land, of this we have surety- never again will it depart from Christian control", but in the same article it expressed fears that a Zionist-dominated Palestine would unleash repression against its Catholic population. Similar sentiments were echoed the following April by the *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, which noted that the 'politico-religious' program of Zionism could spell disaster for the presence of Roman Catholicism in the territory.¹¹⁵ A host of other diocesan papers,

¹¹⁵ 'Christ's Attitude towards the Politico-Religious Attitude of the Jews', *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, April 1918. The journal warned readers that the messiah imagined by Zionists ("Jewish nationalism") was a political figure who would sweep aside all "opposing kingdoms". See also Livia Rokach, *The Catholic Church and the Question of Palestine* (London: Saqi Books, 1987): 13.

including the *Boston Pilot*, the *Michigan Catholic*, and the *Los Angeles Tidings* expressed comparable concerns.¹¹⁶

These initial anxieties, however, appeared to have subsided by the early 1920's. Following the implementation of Churchill's 'White Paper' of 1922, which amounted to a watering down of promises made in the Balfour Declaration, reactions in the American Catholic press toward political Zionism became discernibly muted.¹¹⁷ A joint resolution of Congress in September 1922, which affirmed that the United States favoured the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, did not appear to raise American Catholic ire.¹¹⁸ Vatican protests, both privately and to the League of Nations, appeared to have been effective in diluting the Balfour Declaration, as expectations of imminent Jewish statehood began to diminish. Even the *Brooklyn Tablet*, edited by the implicitly anti-Semitic Patrick F. Scanlan, which had adopted a vitriolic editorial stance against Zionism in previous years, made little mention of it after 1922.¹¹⁹ The remainder of the

¹¹⁶ See, for examples, *Tidings*, 23 April 1920, which expressed the "general international determination that Jerusalem in the future must be under the rule of a Christian power."

¹¹⁷ Churchill's 'White Paper' of 1922 offered a "clarification" of Britain's position on Palestine, which warned Zionists not to place "exaggerated expectations" on the imminent creation of a Jewish state, and appeared to limit the Balfour Declaration to a promise of a home for both Jews and Arabs in the territory, and that all citizens of the territory would be regarded as Palestinians. Zionists considered the White Paper a severe check on the creation of a Jewish state, which it largely was.

¹¹⁸ GUA-SC, Robert F. Wagner Papers, 'Joint Resolution Favouring the Establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish People', 21 September 1922, Box 1, File 4. The resolution favoured a home for the Jews in Palestine, but it asserted that it was "clearly understood that nothing shall be done that may prejudice the civil and religious rights of Christians and all other non-Jewish communities in Palestine, and that the Holy Places and religious buildings and sites in Palestine shall be adequately protected."

¹¹⁹ A survey of mainstream American-Catholic periodicals between 1922 and 1929, which included *The Tablet*, *Commonweal*, *The Pilot*, *The Michigan Catholic*, *The New World*, *America*, *Our Sunday Visitor*, *Catholic Mind*, and *Sign* reveals a dearth of opinion on Zionist ambitions. The Churchill 'White Paper' did appear to hobble Zionist ambitions for much of the decade, and Catholic diocesan papers, reflecting the isolationist sentiment of the era, shifted their attentions mainly to domestic matters.

decade, in fact, marked a benign period in Catholic-Jewish relations in the United States. The resurgence of nativism in this decade, particularly during Al Smith's run for the presidency in 1928, caused Catholic and Jews to find common cause in the face of Protestant bigotry. Since nativists often lumped Catholics and Jews together as potentially subversive and 'un-American', the Catholic press stuck back by emphasizing that bigotry itself was 'un-American'. In doing so, Catholic journalists and essayists often defended Jews alongside Catholics, placing critiques of Zionism temporarily aside.

Also mollifying American Catholic (and Vatican) opinion in the 1920's was the steady expansion of the Church and its institutions in Palestine in these years, combined with the decline of political tensions there after 1922. Under the protection of the British mandate, and in an atmosphere of political stability, the Roman Catholic Church underwent a rapid expansion in Palestine. The Jesuits opened a Jerusalem branch of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, and a number of churches, monasteries, schools and hospitals were erected in Haifa, Jaffa, Nazareth and Jerusalem.¹²⁰ Institutions destroyed during the First World War were rebuilt, and twelve new Roman Catholic parishes were constructed to minister to Palestine's growing Roman Catholic population. *America*, the Jesuit journal founded in 1909 and edited by the firebrand Richard Tierney S.J., reflected this trend towards a muted response to Zionism. Under Tierney, who a later *America* editor described as a "man of strong personal views, detesting sham and doubletalk, and shirking from no controversy", the influential journal took bold positions on a number of national and international affairs, including Mexican anticlericalism (for which Tierney

¹²⁰ Kreutz, 46.

received a letter of thanks from Benedict XV), Irish nationalism and Palestine. In the early 1920's, however, it reflected Rome's general satisfaction with the situation in Palestine. *America* reported approvingly on the British Cardinal Bourne's visit to Palestine in 1924, where he observed that the Arab population had "learned to be patient", and that he did not notice "the same unwise insistence on an untenable domination on the part of the Zionists" as he had in 1919.¹²¹ The temporary cessation of tensions in Palestine turned the attention of the majority of Catholic journals elsewhere in these years. The apparent waning of Zionist ambitions after 1922, combined with Catholic institutional expansion in Palestine, in fact, tempered American Catholic editorial opinion on the subject for nearly the remainder of the decade.

There was also evidence that American Catholic money, which flowed to institutions in Palestine from the CNEWA via the Vatican's Oriental Congregation, was also contributing to the solidification of the Catholic presence in the territory. The NCWC's John Burke, who traveled to Palestine in April 1929 with Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, the apostolic delegate to Washington, praised the Franciscans in particular for their prolific institution-building activities in the Holy Land, and intimated that a Catholic presence in the territory was essential to the Vatican's continued stake there. He specifically cited the importance of American Catholics to this effort, whose "financial and political support help in securing and extending the right of Catholics to care for the Holy Places."¹²²

¹²¹ *America*, 14 February 1925, 432. Quoted in Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 45.

¹²² See *Brooklyn Tablet*, 27 April 1929, 1.

Events in Palestine in the later 1920's, however, served to retrench Catholic hostilities to Zionism. Riots erupted in the territory in 1929 that were the result of long-mounting tensions. Despite British-Vatican cooperation in the region, which had facilitated the expansion of Roman Catholic institutions in Palestine, Arab-Jewish relations had continued to degrade. By 1928, leading Zionist groups had overcome hobbling political and ideological divisions, and the movement began to regain its former momentum.¹²³ Palestinian-Arab leaders, recognizing the resurgent threat of Jewish Statehood, pressed British authorities on negotiations for a separate Arab state in Palestine, pointing to other successful Arab-national movements in the region.¹²⁴ In a bitter atmosphere of growing mistrust, Muslim-Jewish tensions erupted over rights at the Wailing Wall. Though Muslims maintained control of the Wall, Jews were allowed to pray on the pavement beyond it, so long as they did not erect benches, chairs or other accommodations in the area. Days before the 1928 Jewish Day of Atonement (September 28), Jews erected a screen at the Wall to divide male and female faithful. Muslim reaction led to an order to dismantle the screen, which British officials deemed an "infringement of the status quo ante."¹²⁵ British officers began to dismantle the screen during

¹²³ Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 46. The movement was also bolstered by the vibrancy of the American Zionist movement, which provided both financial assistance and political pressure on Washington. On the growth of American Zionism see: Naomi W. Cohen, *The Americanization of Zionism, 1897-1948* (Hanover: Brandeis University Press, 2003); Mark A. Raider, *The Emergence of American Zionism* (New York: New York University Press, 1998).

¹²⁴ The Emirate of Transjordan, for example, which had existed as an autonomous political unit under the Balfour Declaration, was granted full independence from Britain in 1928, though the British maintained a military presence and controlled the territory's foreign affairs. The creation of Transjordan, which limited the geographic extent of an eventual Jewish state, served as a paradigm for Palestinian-Arab nationalists, who sought a similar outcome for Palestine.

¹²⁵ Feldblum, *The American Catholic Press and a Jewish State*, 38. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the 'Status Quo' on Palestine was a 1757 agreement between the Ottoman Empire and various Christian groups in Palestine, guaranteeing access and stewardship of their various holy sites.

Atonement Day services, to which Jews reacted angrily, and to which Muslim leaders mistook as British pro-Arab sympathy. The incident sparked both Jewish and Arab demonstrations, and placed the incompatibility of Jewish and Muslim ambitions in sharp context.

The demonstrations piqued latent Arab-nationalist fervour. Over the next several months, in an effort to underscore Muslim jurisdiction over the Wall and its surrounding area, an extension was built over its northern portion, and a large muezzin was stationed on a nearby roof to call the faithful to prayer five times daily. In the summer of 1929, a passage was created from the Haram to the pavement, effectively making the area a Muslim thoroughfare.¹²⁶ Jewish leaders claimed that these alterations constituted a more severe infringement of the 'status quo ante' than had the prayer screen, to which Arab leaders responded with a host of accusations, including a purported Jewish assault on the Mosque of Omar itself. Tensions crested in August, when Arabs attacked Jewish districts in Hebron, Safad and several other places. In Hebron alone, 60 Jews were murdered, prompting a Zionist writer to observe that, "if it had not been for some friendly Arab families, not a single Jewish soul in Hebron would have remained alive."¹²⁷ British officials, overwhelmed by the impulsiveness and ferocity of the attacks, called in troops from Egypt for assistance. Though order was restored, the incident permanently poisoned

¹²⁶ *Ibid.* For a detailed account of the riots, see Christopher Sykes, *Crossroads to Israel*, (New York: World Publishing, 1965), 99-120.

¹²⁷ William B. Ziff, *The Rape of Palestine*, (New York: Longmans and Green, 1938), 127. Quoted in Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 47. Christian Arabs, on their part, played no significant role in the unrest, a fact that was confirmed by the British High Commissioner in his report on the attacks.

the well of Arab-Jewish relations in Palestine, and served to gird the Zionist movement for future challenges.

While the Vatican did not issue a direct statement condemning the violence, its position could be gleaned from the reactions of the *l'Osservatore Romano*, the Holy See's "semi-official" journal which, for all intents and purposes, accurately represented papal views. It deplored the violence unleashed by Arab mobs, but noted that the Vatican had warned the British of rising tensions, and had recommended "certain changes in policy" in order to avert a bloody conflict.¹²⁸ According to the Vatican, unrest in Palestine was clearly linked to economic injustice stemming from unchecked Jewish immigration. The Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Monsignor Luigi Barlassina, was quoted as saying that both Christians and Muslims opposed continued Jewish immigration to the Holy Land, citing it as a root cause of the recent unrest. (Barlassina, who advised Vatican policy on Palestine and staunchly defended both Christian and Arab rights, presented the Vatican's objections to the Balfour Declaration to the British government in 1921, and gave anti-Zionist speeches on scores of occasions. He was, perhaps, the most vocal Catholic anti-Zionist in Palestine, and he maintained an acrid relationship with both the Zionists and British officials, undoubtedly colouring Vatican responses as a result).

The initial responses of the mainstream American Catholic press was not entirely unsympathetic to Jewish losses, a reflection, in part, of generally amicable Catholic-Jewish relations in the 1920's. Journals such as *America*, *Commonweal* and the *Pilot* that had, throughout the decade, defended Catholics alongside Jews in the face of Protestant

¹²⁸ Rokach, *The Catholic Church and the Question of Palestine*, 17.

bigotry, were generally prompt in condemning Arab violence. *Commonweal* carried a full report on the massacre at Hebron, chiding Muslim leaders for inciting violence, and included a message of condolence from New York's Cardinal Hayes to American Jewish organizations.¹²⁹ The journal further expressed an implicit sympathy with Zionist aims, urging that Jewish access be granted to worship at the Wailing Wall, given that Jew's rights were "anterior to the Moslem's in history; and speaking as Christians, we hold that his right is spiritually superior as well."¹³⁰ The Jesuit journal *America* expressed similar indignation at anti-Jewish violence.¹³¹ Boston's *Pilot* added to the chorus of Catholic sympathy for Jewish targets of Muslim violence. Its editor expressed his solidarity with Jewish victims: "To the unfortunate victims of the uprising in Jerusalem go the condolences and sympathy of their friends throughout the world. The popular mind associates the Jewish people with Jerusalem because of the tradition of the past, and the Old Testament Christian people applauded the Zionist movement."¹³²

A majority of the American Catholic press, however, was condemnatory not only of Arab violence, but of political Zionism itself, which a number of Catholic correspondents regarded as a cause of the 1929 uprisings. The NCWC's correspondent in Palestine and associate of Barlassina, Dr. Alexander Mombelli, filed a series of reports on the Arab-Jewish riots of 1929 which were widely reprinted in the American diocesan

¹²⁹ *Commonweal*, 11 September 1929, 461. Quoted in Feldblum, 39.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ See, for example, *America*, 7 September 1929, 511.

¹³² *Ibid.*

press.¹³³ He traced the root of recent unrest to the Balfour Declaration, in his opinion a flawed agreement that gave oxygen to an ultimately untenable political goal: namely Jewish statehood in Palestine. Arab violence was carefully explained as an inevitable reaction to Jewish political and economic hegemony in the Holy Land, a situation exacerbated by steady Jewish immigration. In stressing the political, and not religious, origins of the riots, Mombelli attempted to diffuse the idea that the uprisings could be ascribed to ‘Moslem fanaticism’, a notion widely expressed in the mainstream secular press. Zionism was described as a purely political program, divorced of any theological legitimacy and “foisted upon pious Jews” only to strengthen its chances of success.¹³⁴ He further suggested that the agitations at the Wailing Wall had been sparked by Zionist groups, who had demonstrated there a day before the violence had erupted. His critiques of Zionism were surpassed only by his reports on the embattled position of the Catholic Church in Palestine, which he filed throughout the 1930’s.¹³⁵

As was frequently mentioned in the Catholic press, Mombelli highlighted the ‘bolshhevistic’ nature of Jewish communes in Palestine, associating Zionism with an ideology long since condemned by the Vatican. He raised the issue of extreme divisions

¹³³ Mombelli’s reports were carried by some of the largest-circulation diocesan papers in the United States, including the *Brooklyn Tablet*, *Commonweal*, the *Michigan Catholic*, the (Chicago) *New World* and *Our Sunday Visitor*.

¹³⁴ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 12 October 1929, 7. Mombelli elaborated on the purely political nature of Zionism in a later article, where he reported on the visit of Captain Robert Canning, an English lawyer who visited Palestine on a fact-finding mission for the British government. Canning praised the “indomitable spirit” of Muslims in the Holy Land who presented a “solid front” against the Zionist movement, as well as the “determination of Arabs never to accept the Balfour Declaration.” The article amounted to a panegyric to Arab resistance and a very thinly veiled censure of Zionism. See ‘Disturbances in Palestine Political and not Religious’, 6 January 1930, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

¹³⁵ See, for example, Mombelli’s ‘Palestine: Catholic Affirm Principles of Their Rights’, 7 December 1935, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 51, File 10.

within the movement itself, where moderates such as Weizmann and fundamentalists such as Ze'ev Jabotinsky vied for control.¹³⁶ As in the mainstream Protestant press, his reports emphasized a lack of support from most Jews for Zionism, painting the movement as the ill-conceived brainchild of a small group of quixotic agitators.¹³⁷ He portrayed the violence of 1929 as a necessary check on Zionist ambitions, and concluded that its demise would only benefit the Holy Land. As he observed: "Zionism has had a very severe trial- its colonies devastated, its buildings robbed, its initiatives paralyzed. When it is considered that it was already in difficulties, the case is all the worse. If the Arabs in future should rise and be supported by their co-religionists of Transjordan, Syria, Iraq and the Arabian peninsula, what might be the result?"¹³⁸

The anti-Zionist and implicitly pro-Arab reportage of Mombelli, which was carried by a number of high-circulation diocesan weeklies, did not escape the attention of Jewish Americans. The tensions that had previously played out between Zionist leaders and the Vatican now appeared to pit Catholics against Jews in the United States. Jewish leaders expressed concern with Catholic coverage of events which, contrary to the mainstream secular press, appeared to fault Zionism for political tensions in Palestine.

¹³⁶ On the struggle between moderate and militant Zionism in the United States, see Rafael Medoff, *Militant Zionism in America: The Rise and Impact of the Jabotinsky Movement in the United States, 1926-1948* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2002).

¹³⁷ Protestant newspapers such as the *Christian Century* similarly emphasized the untenable objectives of political Zionists, opining that the ambitious promises of the Balfour Declaration were not possible given the political situation in Palestine. The *Christian Century* would eventually applaud the British commission's report on the 1929 riots, which recommended halting land sales to Jews and curtailing Jewish immigration to Palestine. It considered the report a death knell of the Balfour Declaration, which it regarded as a "mischievous and ambiguous promise", which would allow for Zionist ambitions that "could not be realized consistently with justice to other elements of the population." See Hertzels Fishman, *American Protestantism and a Jewish State* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973): 15-30, 41-52.

¹³⁸ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 12 October 1929, 7.

Morris Lazon, an influential Baltimore rabbi who would play a significant role in interfaith initiatives in the 1930's through the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ), expressed reservations at the implicit biases in Catholic coverage. Though a leading voice in the American non-Zionist movement, he took exception to what he regarded as an anti-Semitic propensity in the diocesan press, a position he expressed in letters to Burke and the National Catholic News Service (NCNS).¹³⁹ In a response to Lazon, Burke conceded that his correspondent did advocate an anti-Zionist position, but that he did not "show an anti-Jewish spirit", and that he did highlight Arab atrocities. "He does show bias", Burke admitted, "against the extreme form of Zionism, and he does play up the Arab side and the Arab defence. Yet at the same time, he shows the Arabs in a bad light in two respects- in the violence they commit and in their non-conciliatory spirit."¹⁴⁰ In closing, Burke expressed a view that was to define the position of mainstream American Catholicism for the remainder of the 1930's: a denunciation of anti-Semitism and Jewish persecution, combined with a forthright opposition to the tenets of political Zionism. "The impression I have reading his weekly correspondence is that he is not at all anti-Jewish, but that he is certainly in favour of a lessening of the Zionist status...Only when the material is grossly wrong do we interfere, and in this case we hardly think that the case merits intervention."¹⁴¹

American Catholic disdain for Zionism, coupled with a claimed affinity for Jews and an abhorrence of religious persecution in general, closely mirrored the Vatican's

¹³⁹ Morris Lazon to John J. Burke, 12 January 1930, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

¹⁴⁰ John J. Burke to Morris Lazon, 17 January 1930, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

position in the 1930's, and it was reflected broadly in the American Catholic press. The Balfour Declaration, which had received little analysis or comment in the diocesan press in 1917, was now regarded as the source of political and social instability in Palestine. The riots promulgated by Muslims were tied to legitimate grievances stemming from Jewish political and economic dominance in Palestine, and not in eruptions of religious violence. *America*, which adopted an editorial line increasingly sympathetic to Arab concerns, emphasized the marginalization of Arabs by Jews in Palestine, the latter having "every advantage- capital, science and organization."¹⁴² Despite this position of advantage, Zionists were portrayed as a ravenous group bent on further dominance. As the *New World* (Chicago) reported, Zionists demanded "a Jewish police force, a Jewish defence force, and a Jewish administration."¹⁴³ In discounting charges of 'Moslem fanaticism' in the riots of 1929, editor Patrick Scanlan of the *Brooklyn Tablet* reminded readers that "there was once a religious warfare in the Holy Land. The papers said nothing about it. It was when Christ was crucified," a clear allusion to Jewish complicity in the crucifixion and an example of the thinly-veiled anti-Semitism that characterized the paper until at least the early 1950's.¹⁴⁴

The British Commission charged with investigating the 1929 riots reached a conclusion not disagreeable to the Catholic position. Appointed by Lord Passfield

¹⁴² *America*, 1 November 1930, 75.

¹⁴³ *New World* (Chicago), 13 September 1929, 4.

¹⁴⁴ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 7 September 1929, 9. Quoted in Feldblum, *The American Catholic Press and the Jewish State*, 40. The association of Jews and deicide was made on occasion in the Catholic press throughout the interwar period. See, for example, *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Did the Jews or the Roman Put Christ to Death?', 10 April 1937, 6.

(Sidney Webb) and headed by Sir Walter Shaw, the Commission arrived in Palestine in late October 1929 to observe and report on the political and social condition of the British Mandate. The Passfield 'White Paper' essentially amounted to a check on the national ambitions of both Palestinian Arabs and Zionist Jews. As both movements appeared to be gaining momentum and international support (with 'American Zionism' gaining strength, and regional support for Arab Palestinians coalescing), British surveyors feared losing control of the territory to either group. Jewish immigration, which had caused the Jewish population of Palestine to double in ten years (from 84,000 in 1920 to 175,000 in 1930), was cited as a central cause of Arab discontent, and limits on Jewish immigration to Palestine was suggested.¹⁴⁵ Maintenance of the status-quo became central to the Shaw Commission's report. The Labour government of Ramsey MacDonald adopted Shaw's suggestion that the Balfour Declaration really imposed on Britain two separate but equal obligations to both Jews and Arabs. In announcing Britain's official policy on the Palestine Mandate, MacDonald explained that, "A double undertaking is involved, to Jewish people on the one hand, and to the non-Jewish population of Palestine on the other; and it is the firm resolve of His Majesty's Government to give effect, in equal measure, to both parts of the Declaration and to do equal justice to all sections of the population of Palestine."¹⁴⁶

The Vatican, which continued to oppose Jewish statehood in Palestine, was generally approving of the British resolution, which appeared to hobble Zionist national

¹⁴⁵ These limits were never strictly enforced by British officials, and they became effectively impossible to enforce after 1933, when Hitler's rise in Germany created a steady stream of Jewish immigrants to Palestine.

¹⁴⁶ Sicker, *The Middle East in the Twentieth Century*, 47.

ambitions. The Vatican similarly feared Muslim control of the territory, which was regarded as an equally dangerous threat to Roman Catholic interests in the Holy Land. Both Britain and the Vatican feared Soviet infiltration, which the Passfield 'White Paper', by maintaining some semblance of order, appeared to have staved off. For the time being, the synchronous goals of the Vatican and Britain, namely to prevent the hegemony of either Arab or Jew in Palestine, and to ward off Soviet infiltration, appeared to be secure. The Vatican's public stance on Palestine became increasingly cautious in the late 1920's and early 1930's. The Passfield 'White Paper', as did Churchill's 'White Paper' of 1922, appeared to have created a temporary calm in the Holy Land. The Vatican secretariat continued to air its concerns to Britain through diplomatic channels, but its public positions became focused on bolshevism and the promotion of international religious freedom (as in Mexico, Spain and Russia).

The American Catholic press similarly expressed satisfaction with the restrictions of the 'White Paper', which placed a check on a Zionist solution that many Catholic editors considered untenable. *The Commonweal*, a liberal and lay Catholic journal, founded in 1924 and reputed for its principled editorials and liberal slant, issued perhaps the most balanced Catholic reaction to the Passfield 'White Paper', but one which still regarded a Jewish state in Palestine as ultimately untenable:

We have expressed before this our sense of the tragic impasse in Palestine. The peculiar need of the Jews for a geographical home, the peculiar historic and spiritual appropriateness of locating that home in Palestine, are beyond question. Beyond question too, are the facts of the solemn invitation and guarantee extended to the Jewish race in the Balfour document, and that race's overwhelming response in dollars and men. On the other hand, the resentment of the Palestinian Arabs at what they feel to be an alien invasion, is as little to be conjured away; and when we consider the homogeneity of the whole Moslem

body, and the 75,000,000 Indian Mohammedans who at any moment may take up actively the cause of their Arab co-religionists, we can understand Britain's present minimizing of their undertaking.¹⁴⁷

Other American Catholic journals, particularly the diocesan papers which received dispatches from the NCWC News Service, were less judicious in their evaluations. Mombelli, who remained in Palestine as the NCWC's correspondent, placed the blame for the 1929 riots squarely on the Zionists, and considered the roots of discord in the Holy Land to be political, and not racial or religious, a tack that allowed Roman Catholic observers to critique Zionism while avoiding the smear of anti-Semitism. The unrest of 1929, he maintained, was the inevitable end-result of Zionist belligerence. "This roseate idea that a solid and admirable new homeland for the scattered Jewish people, with the current faith of Moses as its centre, has been rearing itself here and has become far too widespread," he wrote in October 1929. "Regrettable as these recent events have been, it was time that something came about to bring the truth of the matter to the fore."¹⁴⁸ In early 1930, Mombelli quoted Robert Gordon-Canning, the noted British fascist, anti-Semite and supporter of Arab nationalism who visited the territory in 1929 and concurred that "the fundamental unrest in Palestine and the hatred of the Jew by the Arab is political, and neither racial nor religious."¹⁴⁹ In stressing that the movement was essentially political, based on a cynical *realpolitik*, Mombelli emphasized its

¹⁴⁷ *Commonweal* 12, 23 July 1930, 312. Quoted in Feldblum, *The American Catholic Press and a Jewish State*, 43.

¹⁴⁸ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Seven Christians Among Killed in Palestine Riots: Zionism Given Blow', 12 October 1929, 1.

¹⁴⁹ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Palestine Trouble is Political: Noted English Lawyer Calls Balfour Guilty of the Unrest', 18 January 1930, 2.

incompatibility with orthodox Judaism, and indeed its links to bolshevism and communism, charges echoed by a number of American bishops and high-ranking figures in the Vatican secretariat. In linking Zionism and bolshevism, he assured readers that Zionists had every intention of “making Palestine a battlefield.”¹⁵⁰

The portrayal of political Zionism as a dangerous, ill-founded and belligerent movement, cynical in its methods, based in power politics, and divorced from orthodox Judaism in spirit and action, formed the essence of American Catholic characterizations of it for the remainder of the 1930s. Steady Jewish immigration to Palestine, and the periodic flare-ups of Arab-Jewish tensions over the decade, only entrenched the anti-Zionist premonitions of the Catholic press.¹⁵¹ Nazi persecution of Jews in Germany, however, gave a new urgency to the question of a Jewish homeland in Palestine as the decade wound to a close. Nazi brutality also steeled the Zionist lobby in the United States which, by the eve of war, was strenuously advocating its positions in Washington. As American Catholic and Vatican positions on Zionism continued to coalesce, and as American Catholics more confidently advocated their views on a number of international questions, so too had the American proponents of Zionism (which included a number of Protestant leaders) become more strident. The war, and its immediate aftermath, would serve to place these opposite camps in sharp relief.

¹⁵⁰ *New World* (Chicago), ‘Jews are Caught Smuggling Arms into Palestine’, 27 December 1929, 4. American Catholic leaders also linked bolshevism and Zionism in the United States, but they again divorced the politics of Zionism with the Jewish faith itself. See *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Criticises Jews Who Backs Reds’, 19 June 1937, 3.

¹⁵¹ See, for example, *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Christian Arabs Issue Protest: Strongly Attack Holy Land Policy of British’, 5 September 1936, 4; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Clergy Quoted in Arab Appeal: Ask Christian America to be Neutral on Palestine’, 22 October 1938, 1.

Chapter 2

Toeing the Roman Line: American Catholics, the Holocaust and the Palestine Question

As the clouds of war continued to gather over Europe, ties between the Vatican, Washington and the American Church continued to coalesce. The appointment of Myron C. Taylor as Roosevelt's 'personal representative' to the Vatican in December 1939 highlighted the President's desire to establish a direct link to the Pope, despite stiff Jewish and Protestant disapproval of the mission. Roosevelt's ties with American Catholic leaders were also strong on the eve of war, and he would count on the support of the bishops to transform a staunch Catholic isolationism into support for the war effort by 1941. Cardinal Spellman's close relationship with Pacelli (who had been elected Pope Pius XII in March 1939) heralded an ever closer working relationship between the Vatican and the leading figure in the American Church. The informal, tripartite 'strategic alliance' appeared to have congealed.

On the question of Zionism, however, a deepening cleft emerged between the Vatican and American Catholics on one side, and Washington and American Zionist groups on the other. The Holocaust, despite providing the most compelling rationale yet for the creation of a Jewish home in Palestine, did not alter either the Vatican's or the American bishops' opposition to the Zionist program, a stance which remained firmly rooted in historical and theological notions. American Catholic expressions of sympathy for persecuted Jews were widespread and genuine, reaching beyond the retrained and abstract statements issued by the wartime Vatican. On the substantive issue of a Jewish

national home in Palestine, however, the American bishops remained firmly in line with Rome. Simply put, the tragedy of the Holocaust did not break up the transnational Roman Catholic consensus on Zionism, despite the increasingly compelling logic for the creation of a Jewish national home.

The Wartime ‘Strategic Embrace’: American Catholics, the Vatican and Washington

The war years witnessed a progressive consolidation of the interrelationship between the Vatican, Washington and the American bishops, an informal alliance which the conflict itself had made increasingly vital. These relationships, of course, had been warming since the early 1930's. The Vatican had long been cognizant of the increasing importance of the United States in international affairs, acknowledged by Pacelli's American 'tour' of 1936, and was anxious to build on its collegial and constructive ties to both American Catholics and their government. By the late 1930's, Roosevelt had spent nearly a decade cultivating his ties to American Catholic leaders, as his close ties to Mundelein, Stritch, Mooney and Spellman attested. Catholics had been instrumental in delivering Roosevelt electoral victories in 1932 and 1936, and the President remained committed to maintaining amiable relations with the Church, particularly as the European situation darkened. His appointment of Myron C. Taylor, a prominent New York industrialist, as his 'personal representative' to the Holy See in December 1939, highlighted the President's genuine desire for closer ties with papal Rome. Roosevelt's appointment of Taylor was a tacit sign of the significance the President placed on a diplomatic channel directly to the Pope. The idea of a representative had the additional support of Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, and Sumner Welles, his undersecretary,

and was negotiated through Cicognani and Spellman.¹ Spellman's central role in the negotiations, in fact, signalled his increasingly important function as a conduit between the Vatican and the President, enhanced by his accession to Archbishop of New York in May 1939. Hull and Welles considered the Vatican an important wartime 'listening post', a repository of diplomatic intelligence that could only enhance American efforts. The Vatican, on its part, recognized the growing role of the United States in global affairs, and was eager to establish more regular channels with Washington, particularly in the midst of a rapidly deteriorating European situation. The American Church, an institution and a constituency both American and Catholic, was poised to become the crucial intermediary in the wartime Washington-Vatican axis.

The American Catholic bishops, on their part, largely abandoned the staunch isolationism of the 1930's to wholly endorse the American war effort. Though isolationism had defined mainstream American Catholic positions on the war debate in the later 1930s, and while pockets of Italian-American Catholics remained sympathetic to Mussolini and the Fascists, the bishops adopted the position that the struggle against Nazi Germany was indeed a fight for the survival of Christian civilization. In December 1941, two weeks after the Pearl Harbor attack, Mooney, acting as the chairman of the administrative board of the NCWC, assured Roosevelt that the United States could count on the unconditional support of the American Catholic Church.² In fully equating Catholicism with unreserved patriotism, Mooney informed the President that "the historic

¹ On the details of Taylor's appointment, see Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Catholic Hierarchy*, 259-269.

² Mooney to Roosevelt, 22 December 1941, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 123, File 4.

position of the Catholic Church in the United States gives us a tradition of devoted attachment to the ideals and institutions of government we are now called upon to defend.” He assured Roosevelt that the bishops, “spiritual leaders of more than twenty million Americans,” were “keenly conscious of [their] responsibilities in the hour of the nation’s testing.”³ In concluding, Mooney reiterated resolute Catholic support, and intimated the importance of the struggle for the survival of Christian civilization. “We give you, Mr. President, the pledge of our whole-hearted support in the difficult days that lie ahead. We place at your disposal in that service our institutions and their consecrated personnel. We will lead our priests and our people in constant prayer that God may bear you up under the heavy burdens that weigh upon you...that He will strengthen us all to win a victory that will be a blessing not for our nation alone but for the whole world.”

In short order, support for the war effort was widely trumpeted in the Catholic press, which characterized the struggle as a stark confrontation between Christian civilization and barbarism.⁴ In January 1942 the Vatican, through Cicognani, virtually demanded that the American episcopate present a unified public stand of support for the statement, despite the lingering of isolationist sentiments among some bishops.⁵ It was a corporate action that the Vatican would soon again expect on the question of Palestine. The statement, which was released to the press, was also reported on widely in

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Prior to August 1941, American Catholic support for the war effort was not unanimous. Some German-American bishops were reticent to openly support a war against their ancestral land, and some Irish-American bishops saw only a threat to Britain, not Nazi barbarity. Lend-Lease also gave some American bishops pause, as it appeared that the United States was finding common cause with Soviet Russia (whom many American Catholics had vilified throughout the Spanish Civil War). This ambiguity was reflected in the Catholic press as well. See Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy*, 269-273.

⁵ Cicognani to Ready, 12 January 1941, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

mainstream papers, including the *New York Times*, which reprinted the letter in its entirety on Christmas Day.⁶ In his response to the NCWC, Roosevelt thanked the bishops for their pledge of support, and assured that an allied victory would be a victory for Christian civilization. “We shall win this war and in victory we seek not vengeance,” he intoned, “but the establishment of an international order in which the spirit of Christ shall rule the hearts of men and of nations.”⁷ As the United States entered the war, Roosevelt could certainly count on Catholic enlistment, which would surpass even the high levels of the First World War.

Events of the war itself drew the parties ever closer. Soon after the American entry into the conflict, the NCWC again assured Roosevelt of the unswerving loyalty of American Catholics to the war effort. In a memorandum to the President, Mooney, speaking on behalf of the NCWC, presaged a fruitful postwar cooperation between the Vatican and the United States, “when anti-Christian philosophies which have taken the sword will perish by the sword,” and he outlined the unanimity of papal pronouncements and American objectives.⁸ The nation was united in the war effort, he continued, and “among the architects of this unity are the foremost Catholic leaders in our country.”⁹ It was a statement of fealty to which the Vatican would demand full adherence to from the American episcopate. The American bishops’ annual statement for 1942, ‘Victory and

⁶ *New York Times*, ‘Catholic Bishops Hail Will to Win’, 25 December 1941.

⁷ Roosevelt to Mooney, 24 December 1941, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 123, File 4.

⁸ Myron C. Taylor to Pope Pius XII, 19 September 1942, *Actes et Documents du Saint Siege relatifs a la Seconde Guerre Mondiale* (Vatican City, 1975): Volume 5, 681-684. (Hereafter *Actes et Documents*).

⁹ *Ibid.* Quoted in Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy*, 284-285.

Peace’, affirmed the sentiments of Mooney’s letter.¹⁰ Roosevelt, on his part, sought to assure the Vatican that he shared papal visions of a postwar order. In September 1942, he prepared a lengthy and confidential memorandum for Pope Pius XII, to be delivered personally by Taylor, in which he praised the moral leadership of the Roman Catholic Church, particularly in denouncing Nazi racialism, and pledged to fight the Axis to the bitter end.¹¹ He further praised the support of the American Catholic bishops, who had engaged “the lives, the treasure and the sacred honour of American Catholics in the defence of their freedom against aggression.” He further emphasized the enduring unity of purpose between Washington and papal Rome. “We want nothing better,” he concluded, “than a continuation of those parallel efforts made by the Pope and the President before the war became general.”¹²

The war also highlighted the growing role of the American episcopate as an intermediary between Washington and the Vatican, despite the existence of an American envoy to the pope. The allied bombings of Rome vividly underscored the diplomacy of the American bishops, particularly Spellman, Mooney and Stritch, on behalf of the Vatican. Allied strategic bombing of Rome throughout the spring, summer and autumn of 1943, designed to loosen the German grip on the Eternal City, strained relations between the Vatican and Washington. Publically, the bishops said little about the bombings, eager

¹⁰ ‘Victory and Peace: Annual Statement Issued by the NCWC Administrative Board in the Name of the Bishops of the United States’, 14 November 1942, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 19.

¹¹ ‘Confidential Memorandum’, Roosevelt to Pope Pius XII, 2 September 1942, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 11, File 1. In the same memo, the President pleaded with the Vatican not to accept a negotiated peace with the Axis, a move which would have severely jeopardized American and allied military strategy in Europe, as well as plans for postwar settlements.

¹² *Ibid.*

to maintain a unified front in supporting the war effort, and reticent to incur the hostility of non-Catholic groups. Privately, however, the bishops strenuously commuted to Roosevelt the Pope's desire to spare Rome further bombings. In September, the NCWC issued a letter to Roosevelt, in the name of the entire American episcopate, reminding the President of his responsibility to protect Rome from further damage.¹³ Spellman, on his part, met repeatedly with Roosevelt to negotiate a cessation. During a meeting with the president in September 1943, Spellman presented a statement, also signed by Mooney and Stritch, which recommended that Rome be declared an 'Open City', and immediately be spared allied bombs.¹⁴ The trio didn't hesitate to draw parallels between their demands and American domestic politics, alluding to the political power "of more than twenty million American Catholics, [who hoped] that their government will not have to share further responsibility for even more disastrous developments that threaten the Holy See under the conditions." The statement further warned against ignoring the international political influence of the Roman Catholic Church, continuing that "military measures which offend the religious sense of so many citizens in so many nations may have consequences fatally prejudicial to the interests we all have at heart in the making of the peace and to the national and international collaboration necessary to that blessed end."¹⁵ Roosevelt, on his part, pledged to his guests the creation of a free zone of twenty miles around the city, and assured them that the allied (and American) cause was in full unison with the Holy See's.

¹³ Michael Ready to Roosevelt, 15 September 1943, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 21, File 7. In this letter, the bishops re-affirmed their "deep patriotic devotion" to the President and to the American war effort.

¹⁴ Mooney, Spellman and Stritch to Roosevelt, 21 September 1943, *Actes et Documents*, Volume 7, 648-650.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

On 11 November, just weeks after the meeting with Roosevelt, the American bishops convened in Washington for their annual meeting. While the annual statement issued for 1943, 'The Essentials of a Good Peace', expounded on the necessary conditions of a Christian postwar order, the meeting was also significant for the adoption of a resolution where the bishops pledged their "filial devotion to the Holy See."¹⁶ In it, they vowed to raise public awareness through the Catholic press, and keep Washington apprised of any threats to the Vatican City or other church interests. Though the bombings of Rome were not mentioned explicitly, they were clearly implied. The resolution was a call to action for the American bishops, echoing the pope's July request, on visiting a shelled Roman neighbourhood, that the American Church "demonstrate its dissatisfaction in such great grief." Though the bishops never publically criticized the allied bombings of Rome, the American Catholic press expressed evident dissatisfaction, clearly revealing the position of the American Church.

While the war, then, drew the Pope, the President and the American bishops closer together, it also raised hopes that the bishops might more effectively press the Vatican's demands on Washington. The bishops, on their part, had answered the nation's call to duty, and their protests on the bombing of Rome represented their first attempt, since the American entry into the war, to shape Washington's policy on an issue germane to the Vatican. It was a lobby that would be mobilized again on a number of postwar questions, including Palestine.

¹⁶ 'The Essentials of a Good Peace: A Statement Issued by the NCWC Administrative Board in the Name of the Bishops of the United States', 11 November 1943, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

Into the Abyss: The Pope and The Shoah

The Second World War and the Holocaust proved to be cataclysms that shaped subsequent European and international affairs in profound and irrevocable ways. The conflict, besides proving to be the crucible of a new and dangerous ideological divide, produced atrocities that made the logic of a Jewish homeland more compelling. Britain, the mandatory power, had been reticent to support Zionist ambitions for much of the 1930's, and the British 'White Paper' of 1939 appeared to have placed renewed obstacles in the path of such a goal.¹⁷ The horrors of the Holocaust, however, and the growing sense of the depth of the Jewish refugee crisis created a sense of urgency on the Zionist Question from 1943 onwards. The tragedy of European Jewry underscored the moral, political and historical legitimacy of a Jewish state in Palestine. Much scholarly ink has been spilled on the question of the Vatican's efforts, or lack thereof, to assist European Jews during the darkest days of their history.¹⁸ Significant is that fact that a growing awareness of the tragedy affecting European Jewry after 1942 did not alter the Vatican's fundamental opposition to the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, a position it had presented in its 1922 'aide memoire' to the League of Nations, and which remained unchanged through the war.

¹⁷ The British 'White Paper', as discussed in the previous chapter, limited Jewish immigration to Palestine from 1939 onwards, and generally thwarted larger Zionist ambitions for the creation of a Jewish state in the region.

¹⁸ A deluge of scholarly attention has been lavished on the question of Vatican assistance to European Jews during the Holocaust. The debate was initiated by the 1963 publication of Rolf Hochhuth's *The Deputy*, a play that accused Pius XII of not acting forcefully enough in denouncing Nazi crimes against the Jews, and that set the tone for future debates on the role of the wartime Pope.

The Vatican did consider the Holocaust a tragedy for humankind, and numerous papal attempts to assist Italian and European Jews were documented.¹⁹ Despite the ambiguity of official pronouncements, for which the wartime Vatican has been justifiably criticized, examples of papal assistance to European Jews during the war abound. A brief examination of Vatican efforts does place its policy on political Zionism into wider context. In Italy, the Vatican had protested Fascist anti-Semitic laws since their inception in 1937, a reflection of Pius XI's deep enmity for racialist ideologies. In 1939, when these decrees excluded Jews from a number of professions, including medicine, law, teaching and journalism, Cardinal Maglione, the Vatican Secretary of State, openly criticized the "so-called racial laws", and stressed in a note to the Mussolini government that the laws created a "good deal of suffering, desolation and ruin".²⁰ The Vatican maintained official protests against Italian racial laws for the duration of the war. Pinchas Lapide, a postwar Israeli diplomat and prominent scholar of the wartime papacy, contended that racial laws were never fully implemented in Italy due in part to the ceaseless interventions of the papal nuncio to Italy, Francesco Borgongini-Duca, on behalf of Italian Jews.²¹ Vatican diplomats in Nazi-occupied territories such as France,

¹⁹ An extensive scholarship has emerged which sought to balance accusations against the Vatican's wartime 'silence' on the Holocaust. This was initiated by Pinchas Lapide's *Three Popes and the Jews* (New York, 1967), and was seconded by Robert A. Graham's *Pius XII's Defence of Jews and Others: 1944-45* (Milwaukee, 1987). Since the appearance of Cornwell's *Hitler's Pope*, numerous other scholars have produced works defending Pacelli's wartime record. These include Jose Sanchez's *Pius XII and the Holocaust: Understanding the Controversy* (Washington, 2002), Joseph Bottum and David Dalin's *The Pius War: Responses to the Critics of Pius XII* (Lanham, 2004), Dalin's *The Myth of Hitler's Pope: How Pius XII rescued Jews from the Nazis* (Washington, 2005), and Margherita Marchione's *Did Pius XII Help the Jews?* (Mahwah, 2007).

²⁰ Pinchas Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews*, (New York, 1967), 127.

²¹ *Ibid*, 128-138.

Slovakia, Croatia and Greece similarly protested to local official against anti-Semitic decrees, and with some success, particularly in Catholic states.²²

Efforts to assist European Jews extended beyond official protests. Between 1939 and 1945, more than six thousand Italian Jews obtained passports, ship tickets and travel money from the Rome-based St. Raphael's Association, an organization directly funded by the Vatican. Countless others were sheltered in monasteries, churches, convents and private homes, all with the explicit knowledge of the Pope, and consistent with his opposition to Nazi and Fascist racialist policies.²³ The Vatican Relief Commission, at a cost of nearly one million dollars, supplied food, clothing, and medicine to untold thousands of refugees, prisoners and partisans during the winter of 1943-44, including at least 6000 Jews in Rome alone. As confidence in papal efforts to assist persecuted minorities increased, funds flowed to the Vatican from various international sources. In January 1940, the Chicago-based 'United Jewish Appeal for Refugees' forwarded 125,000 dollars as a contribution to Vatican rescue efforts. Throughout the war, the

²² For a detailed analysis of Vatican diplomatic efforts to mitigate anti-Semitic laws in Nazi-occupied states, see John F. Morley, *Vatican Diplomacy and the Jews During the Holocaust, 1939-1943* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1980): 23-194. See also Fiorello Cavallo, "La Santa Sede contro le Deportazioni degli Ebrei dalla Slovacchia durante la Seconda Guerra Mondiale" *La Civiltà Cattolica* 112, 2 (1961): 3-18; and John F. Morley's "Pope Pius XII, Roman Catholic Policy and the Holocaust in Hungary" in Carol Rittner and John K. Roth's *Pope Pius XII and the Holocaust* (New York, 2002): 154-174.

²³ On Pius XII's assistance to Italian Jews, see Susan Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy* (New Haven, 2000). See also Owen Chadwick, "Weizsacker, the Vatican and the Jews of Rome" *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 28, 2 (April, 1977): 179-199; Robert Lieber, "Pio XII e gli Ebrei di Roma, 1943-44" *La Civiltà Cattolica* 112,1 (1961): 448-455; Robert A. Graham, *Pius XII's Defence of Jews and Others, 1944-45*, 14-22.

Vatican distributed American federal funds through its various aid organizations in Rome and throughout Italy, for the benefit of Jews and non Jews alike.²⁴

The Vatican also sought to facilitate the emigration of Italian Jews to safer wartime havens. One of the more famous of these initiatives was the provision of more than a thousand Brazilian immigration visas to Italian Jews, many of them recent converts to Catholicism, to provide safe passage from Rome to Rio de Janeiro, a plan which saw more than a thousand visas issued.²⁵ The Vatican also provided financial support to DELASEM (*Delegazione per L'Assistenza degli Emigranti Ebrei*), a Jewish resistance organization that operated in Italy throughout the war, and that facilitated the emigration of nearly 9000 Jews from Italy, primarily to neutral states such as Spain, Portugal and Ireland.²⁶ The initiative, though undoubtedly beneficial to Jews fleeing Nazi terror, fit neatly into the Vatican's longstanding position on Zionism. It recognized the legitimate plight of persecuted Jewry, and it sought to offer material and logistical aid where it could, but it implicitly suggested a destination other than Palestine, consistent with the view that the *Terra Santa* itself was sacred to Roman Catholics, and could not be jeopardized by the fulfillment of the Zionist program.

²⁴ In April of 1944, for example, President Roosevelt, through the office of Myron Taylor, asked if the Holy See could transmit financial aid to Polish Jewish refugees in Rome and to the Jewish children's aid society in Rome. In its reply, the Vatican agreed, stating it would "continue, as it has in the past, to work for all victims of persecution." See Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews*, 128.

²⁵ On the 'Brazilian Visa Project', see Morley, *Vatican Diplomacy and the Jews During the Holocaust*, 18-22.

²⁶ DELASEM continued its work in the postwar period, with the assistance of the Vatican, in facilitating the emigration of Italian and European Jews to Palestine, the United States and South America.

Vatican efforts were acknowledged by a number of prominent Jewish and Zionist leaders. In a 1943 letter to Amleto Cicognani, the apostolic delegate in Washington, Chaim Weizmann expressed gratitude to the Church for its assistance to European Jews. “I was happy to hear from Secretary [Henry] Morgenthau,” he said, “that the Holy See is lending its powerful help wherever it can, to mitigate the fate of my persecuted co-religionists, and once more I would like to give expression to my deep feeling of gratitude in which I am sure every humanitarian would share.”²⁷ In the immediate postwar years, praise for Pius XII from Jewish leaders was largely effusive. Dr. Raphael Cantoni, head of the Italian Jewry’s Wartime Assistance Committee, observed of Roman Catholic efforts: “The Church and the papacy have saved Jews as much and in as far as they could save Christians...Six million of my co-religionists have been murdered by the Nazis, but there could have been many more victims, had it not been for the efficacious intervention of Pius XII.”²⁸ In a private audience granted in the fall of 1945, a group of prominent Jewish leaders, including Italian Rabbi Elezior Jeruscialmi, thanked the Pope for his efforts in sparing their co-religionists the worst of Nazi abuses.²⁹ Moshe Sharett, the future Israeli foreign minister and prime minister, echoed these sentiments following an audience with Pius XII in April 1945: “I told him [the Pope] that my first duty was to

²⁷ Weizmann to Cicognani, 15 June 1943. Meyer Weisgal and Barnet Litvinoff, eds. *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, Vol. 21 (New Brunswick: NJ, 1977): 38.

²⁸ Andrej Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: The Struggle for the Holy Land* (New York, 1990): 76.

²⁹ See the *Michigan Catholic*, ‘Jews Thank Pope for Aid Given Them’, 6 December 1945, 1. Jeruscialmi was joined by Signor Rodolfo Grandi and Signor Isaac Frend, who thanked the Pope on behalf of Albanian Jews. In responding to his guests, Pius XII that the Holy See “has never left any doubt that its teachings and its external actions did not, and could not, admit any of these false concepts which in the history of civilization will be remembered among the most deplorable and dishonourable travesties of human thought and sentiment.”

thank him, and through him, the Catholic Church, on behalf of the Jewish public for all they had done in the various countries to rescue Jews, to save children, and Jews in general. We are deeply grateful to the Catholic Church for what she did in those countries to help save our brothers.”³⁰

Throughout the war, a distinct bifurcation endured in the Vatican’s response to persecution of Europe’s Jews, characterized by assistance to Jews, where possible, on the one hand, and an opposition to the goals of political Zionism on the other. Simply put, the tragedy of the Holocaust and the refugee crisis that it created did not translate into Vatican support for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Assistance to European Jews was regarded as a Christian duty, an obligation to lend assistance to a suffering fellow man. Monsignor Domenico Tardini, the Vatican’s undersecretary of state, expressed as much in the spring of 1943, when he observed that “the Jewish question is a question of humanity. The persecutions to which the Jews in Germany and the occupied or conquered countries are subjected are an offence against justice, charity, humanity...Therefore, the Catholic Church has full reason to intervene, whether in the name of divine law or natural law.”³¹ Support for a Jewish homeland, however, despite the catalyst that the Holocaust had created toward that very end, was unfailingly opposed by Pius XII’s Vatican, based on the ancestral Roman Catholic tenet that the *Terra Santa*

³⁰ Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews*, 226.

³¹ Memorandum by Monsignor Domenico Tardini, Vatican, 7 April 1943, *Actes et documents, Volume 9*, 233. Quoted in Kreutz, *The Vatican and the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 74.

was sacred to the faith, and must never fall under the political jurisdiction of a sovereign power.

In the spring and summer of 1943, as the world became more fully apprised of the tragedy of the Holocaust, Cardinal Luigi Maglione, Pope Pius XII's Secretary of State, restated the Vatican's opposition to Zionism in stark terms. In a March letter to William Godfrey, apostolic delegate to London, he expressed disappointment that Britain, which had recently facilitated the immigration of Jews from all corners of Europe to Palestine, had "altered its course", and appeared to be contravening the limits on immigration outlined in the 1939 'White Paper'.³² It was clear that Maglione equated Jewish immigration to Palestine with the creation of a Jewish state there. "The Holy See has never approved the project of making Palestine a home for the Jews," he continued. "Palestine has always been more sacred to the Catholic than the Jews."³³ Maglione's notes from April revealed similar sentiments. He reflected on the "particular historical rights" held by Catholics on the Holy Places, which extended "with deep piety and devotion to Palestine itself, made sacred by the presence and memory of the divine redeemer", alluding that the whole territory was sacred to the Church.³⁴ As such, he concluded that "Catholics would be injured in their religious sentiment and rightly fear for their rights if Palestine would belong exclusively to the Hebrews," echoing sentiments that could be traced back to the writings of Origen, Tertullian and Augustine.

³² Luigi Maglione to William Godfrey, 3 March 1943, *Actes et Documents*, Volume 9, 184.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Notes on the persecution of Jews, particularly Slovakian, and the actions of the Holy See, Luigi Maglione, 7 April 1943, *Actes et Documents*, Volume 9, 233.

In a May letter to Cicognani, the apostolic delegate to Washington, he re-iterated the Vatican's 1922 'aide memoire' to the League of Nations, which continued to define the Vatican's position on Palestine.³⁵ The Holy See, he expressed, could not accept the creation of a Jewish state in a territory that held such deep historical, theological and spiritual significance for the world's Roman Catholics. It was a territory, he reminded Cicognani, which constituted the very cradle of Christianity. Though he admitted that "at a time, the Jews did have a home in Palestine", he questioned "how this historical criteria could be adopted to restore a people to a territory they occupied more than nineteen centuries ago?"³⁶ He suggested that another home could be found for the Jews outside of Palestine. Pushing forward the Zionist program, he warned, would be dangerous. "It would create serious new international problems, and would lead to a justifiable lament from the Holy See, which has always provided charity and assistance to non-aryans." Maglione's statements perfectly reflected the duality of Roman Catholic attitudes towards the Jewish plight, which encompassed a professed Christian duty to assist fellow men in need, with a resolute rejection of the solution proposed by Zionism. It was a duality almost perfectly mirrored by the institutional response of the American Catholic Church.

American Catholics, the Holocaust and Zionism

From the time of the *Kristallnacht* forward, expressions of solidarity with European Jews, and denunciations of Nazi brutality, were largely forthcoming from the various organs of the American Catholic Church. This was despite the fact that the

³⁵ Luigi Maglione to Amleto Cicognani, 18 May 1943, *Actes et Documents*, Volume 9, 300.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Church was still working to effectively constrain the anti-Semitic ‘radio priest’, Father Charles Coughlin, whose popularity on the airwaves had contributed to tepid Catholic-Jewish relations in the 1930’s. Maria Mazzenga has argued that a crassly anti-Semitic broadcast of Coughlin’s, delivered in the immediate wake of the *Kristallnacht*, galvanized his opponents in the American Church to present a more definitive stance of support for European Jews.³⁷ The brutality of the *Kristallnacht*, which aroused sympathies across the American political and religious spectrum, combined with Coughlin’s crass response to it, did appear to spur the American Church to speak out more openly against Nazi crimes.

In the immediate wake of the *Kristallnacht*, the Knights of Columbus published an open letter to Roosevelt, expressing the organization’s “deepest sympathy for the distressed Jews of Europe”, and urging the American government to use its diplomatic channels and political clout to help secure the refuge of Jews to Palestine and other safe havens.³⁸ John A. Ryan, the foremost progressive American Catholic thinker of the prewar era, wasted little time in denouncing Nazism following the *Kristallnacht*.³⁹ In a July 1938 address to the annual convention of Duluth’s B’nai B’rith, Ryan denounced

³⁷ See Maria Mazzenga, ‘Toward an American Catholic Response to the Holocaust: Catholic Americanism and Kristallnacht’, in Mazzenga, ed. *American Religious Responses to Kristallnacht* (New York, 2009): 85-144. Coughlin’s broadcast, titled ‘Persecution- Jewish and Christian’, was delivered on 20 November 1938, and presented an odd array of accusations against German Jews, linking them to both finance and communism, and implicitly suggesting that brutality against them was the only option left to Hitler and the Nazi Party. On the issue of persecution, Coughlin suggested that Roman Catholics should more properly focus their attentions on the maltreatment of Catholics around the world, using the recent examples from Spain and Mexico. See ‘Address by Father CE Coughlin’, 20 November 1938, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Folder 1, Box 16.

³⁸ Christopher J. Kaufmann *Faith and Fraternalism: The History of the Knights of Columbus, 1882-1982* (New York, 1982): 335-336.

³⁹ Mazzenga, *American Religious Responses to Kristallnacht*, 93.

Nazi persecution of the Jews as “contrary to the moral law of nature,” and deemed Nazi racial theories as “utterly without scientific basis.”⁴⁰ He continued that “Hitler’s theory and practice with regard to the Jews contradicts, as he well knows, the very doctrines of Christianity.” Ryan assured his audience that “authorized teachers and expounders of Catholic doctrine do not indulge in anti-Semitism,” and he re-iterated the “outspoken espousal of the Jewish cause” by Catholic editors and writers in the United States.⁴¹ Later in 1938, he wrote that Nazism, which was “excessively nationalistic, adheres to a theory of racial superiority and racial purity which are without foundation in fact, and which have been used as a pretext for an enormous amount of injustice and uncharity towards the Jewish race.”⁴² In 1939, Ryan told the audience of a Jewish civic forum in New York that anti-Semitism was “contrary to Christianity and violates the basic principles of American democracy. Followers of Christ cannot believe He would hate the race from which He sprang or any other people.”

Ryan did not stand alone in expressing such sentiments in the immediate wake of the *Kristallnacht*. American Catholic solidarity with, and sympathy for, German Jewry was expressed emphatically and passionately in a thirty minute radio address, broadcast from the Catholic University of America, and carried by NBC to a nationwide audience. Organized by Maurice Sheehy, professor of religion at Catholic University, and airing in November 1938, just 2 weeks after the *Kristallnacht*, the address featured a number of prominent American Catholic leaders, including Sheehy, Bishops John Mitty of San

⁴⁰ ‘Mgr. Ryan Raps Nazi Persecution of Jews’, *The Michigan Catholic*, 14 July 1938, 3-4.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

Francisco, John Gannon of Erie, and Peter Ireton of Richmond, former Democratic presidential candidate Al Smith, and Catholic University rector Monsignor Joseph Corrigan.⁴³ Sheehy's opening remarks were indicative of the tone of the broadcast. "The world is witnessing a great tragedy in Europe today," he intoned, "and after sober, calm reflection, various groups and leaders of the Catholic Church have sought permission to raise their voices, not in mad hysteria, but in firm indignation against the atrocities visited upon the Jews in Germany. The Catholic loves his Jewish brother because, as Pope Pius XI had pointed out, we are all spiritual Semites."⁴⁴ The address amounted to a resolute condemnation of Nazi aggression, and implicitly served to counter the recent anti-Semitic musings of Coughlin. In effect, the address proposed an alternative to Coughlin's defensive Catholicism, beckoning American Catholics to champion religious freedom and democratic ideals, and to pray for his persecuted Jewish 'brothers'. It was this enlightened strain of American Catholicism which informed Catholic responses to Jewish persecution through the war.

In large part, Catholic periodicals and diocesan newspapers in the United States reflected the position of Rome; namely that the persecution of European Jews was a tragedy for all humankind, but that it did not necessitate, or obviate, the creation of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Declarations of solidarity with persecuted Jews, therefore, featured prominently in a wide range of Catholic journals from the *Kristallnacht* forward, reflective of genuine American Catholic sympathies for the Jewish plight. The widely

⁴³ For a transcript of the broadcast, aired on 16 November 1938, see <http://libraries.cua.edu/achrcua/kristallnacht/AntinaziTranscript.pdf> (Accessed 9 February 2010).

⁴⁴ Mazzenga, *American Religious Responses to Kristallnacht*, 96.

circulated *Commonweal*, edited by Edward S. Skillin, was at the forefront of Catholic sympathy and solidarity with European Jewry. Under Skillin's direction (which lasted to 1967), the journal became a leading voice of liberal Catholicism in the United States, publishing a range of seminal essays by figures, both Catholic and non-Catholic, such as Hanna Arendt, Luigi Sturzo, G.K. Chesterton, Evelyn Waugh, Hilaire Belloc and others. He was unafraid to challenge preponderant views in the American Church. In 1938, Skillin penned an editorial deploring the widespread tendency of American Catholics to conflate Franco's anti-communism with the cause of the faith, a position which placed him at odds with a number of leading figures in the American Church.⁴⁵

On the question of Jewish persecution, the *Commonweal* was unequivocal. The journal heavily criticized Charles Lindbergh's anti-Semitic 'Iowa Speech' of 1941, in which the former aviator and ardent isolationist identified Jews as the "principal agitators for war".⁴⁶ Jewish control of publishing and media, contended Lindbergh, drew the United States closer to a conflict it should properly avoid. A *Commonweal* editorial strongly disproved Lindbergh's speech, questioning his faulty logic in linking Jews to either media control or to pro-war agitation. Lindbergh's crude positions and barely concealed anti-Semitism, it continued, threatened to discredit the legitimate isolationist positions held by so many American Catholic leaders. The fate that had befallen European Jews, it argued, was a scourge that could only spread if not opposed by all faith

⁴⁵ On the *Commonweal*'s role in shaping liberal Catholicism in the United States, see Rodger Van Allen, *The Commonweal and American Catholicism: The Magazine, the Movement, the Meaning* (Philadelphia, 1974).

⁴⁶ *The Commonweal*, 'The Lindbergh Speech', 26 September 1941, 532. By the late 1930's, Lindbergh had become a chief spokesman of the ardently isolationist 'America First' movement.

groups, including Roman Catholics. “Anti-Semitism is an element and a symptom”, it concluded, “of the calamity from which all groups and classes of America should want to save as much of the world as possible.”⁴⁷

Through 1942 and 1943, as the world became gradually apprised of the full extent of Nazi plans for Jewish genocide, the American Catholic press continued to denounce anti-Semitism and Nazi crimes in the strongest terms. In those years, *Commonweal* ran a series of articles by the exiled French-Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain that attempted to discredit Nazi racialist theories, and their resultant policies, on philosophical, moral and scientific grounds.⁴⁸ Maritain eloquently imparted to his readers the notion that anti-Semitism had historically been, and remained, repugnant to any genuine interpretation of Christian history, and was the result of human weakness and distorted biblical and theological interpretations. German racial laws, according to Maritain, represented a complete and total abandonment of any genuine Christian morality, and stood in opposition to God’s natural law, which Pius XI had recently emphasized in the anti-Nazi encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*. As to whether or not Catholics should embrace the American entry into the war to fight the totalitarian persecutions, Maritain was unequivocal. “The only conclusion possible,” he observed in 1943, “is an unutterable horror of the mind and heart in the face of the human degradation

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ See *The Commonweal*, ‘On Anti-Semitism’, 25 September 1942, 534-537; *The Commonweal*, ‘Racist Law and the True Meaning of Racism’, 4 June 1943, 181-188. For a fuller treatment of Maritain’s complex views on Judaism and Nazi anti-Semitism, see Richard Francis Crane, ‘Jacques Maritain, the Mystery of Israel, and the Holocaust’, *Catholic Historical Review*, (Spring, 2009): 25-56.

of which racist crimes are the expression, and a resolution to fight this degradation to the death.”⁴⁹

The Catholic weekly *America*, published by the Jesuits since 1909 and considered as moderate and judicious in its editorial line, presented similar denunciations of Nazi crimes and offered messages of Catholic solidarity with the persecuted Jews of Europe. Like the *Commonweal*, it was edited in this period by another leading Catholic liberal, John LaFarge S.J., who would gain later acclaim as a champion of racial equality, establishing the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice in 1960. *America*'s relatively wide circulation and weekly magazine format, combined with its reputation for attracting noted non-Catholic contributors, made it an influential journal in both Catholic and wider circles.⁵⁰ As with *Commonweal*, *America* drew consistent attention to Jewish persecutions, particularly from the summer of 1942 forward, as news of Nazi atrocities became more widely understood in the West. A 1942 article, by the Jewish-American field reporter Maurice Feldman, detailed the entrenchment of Nazi torment of German and central European Jews, outlining the dire situations in Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Croatia. In concluding, Feldman presaged the ‘Final Solution’ in observing that “there is no doubt that the Nazis have plans not only for the destruction of the Jews in Europe, but throughout the whole world.”⁵¹

⁴⁹ *The Commonweal*, ‘Racist Law and the Meaning of Racism’, 4 June 1943, 181.

⁵⁰ *America*'s wartime circulation hovered around 60,000 copies.

⁵¹ *America*, ‘Persecution Stalks the Jews Across the Face of Europe’, 19 September 1942, 654-655.

By the spring of 1943, *America* drew attention to, and denounced, Nazi pogroms in the most explicit manner. In June, it reprinted from *Commonweal* parts of Maritain's passionate and erudite refutation of Nazi racist laws, assuring that his ideas received wide exposure in the Catholic press.⁵² In solidarity with Maritain's positions, *America* warned its readers that any equivocation in Catholic attitudes to the Jewish plight amounted to a grave error. "It is not a question of this or that human being," the editorial intoned, "it is a question of all human beings and methods of destruction which exceed the nightmares of the most diabolical imagination."⁵³ It opined that Jewish sufferings could not be dismissed as mere "atrocious stories", but a plan for racial genocide carried out to "an inexorable and well defined plan." Through 1943 and 1944, *America's* editorials reminded readers that the tragedy unfolding for Jews, which stemmed from wrong-headed anti-Semitic vitriol, could befall Catholics as well. The atrocities, it stated, were "but a step" from Catholics if they condoned the spread of this "moral poison in the world, rooted in hatred of God and Christ Himself, which spreads like a forest fire and soon cares little what victim its violence destroys."⁵⁴ Similar sentiments were voiced by Louisiana's Father Elliot Ross, who told the New Orleans *Catholic Action of the South* that there were "Catholics who do not realize that if anti-Semitism comes [to the United States], anti-Catholicism will not be far behind. If anti-Semitism ever becomes

⁵² *America*, 'The Mass Murder of Jews', 12 June 1943, 266.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* In this vein, see also *America*, 'Persecution Stalks the Jews Across the Face of Europe', 19 September 1942, 654-655; *America*, 'Fulton Sheen on Anti-Semitism', 28 November 1942, 200; *America*, 'The Massacred Jews', 13 March 1943, 630; *America*, 'The Church on the Jews', 15 May 1943; *America*, 'The Murder of a Race', 6 October 1945(?).

formidable among us, every probability points to the prejudice breaking bounds and including Catholics as well as Jews.”⁵⁵

Though *America* and *Commonweal* represented the leading edge in the denunciation of Nazi racialism and solidarity with European Jewry, similar expressions could be found across the American Catholic press. The large-circulation *Catholic World*, published by the Paulist fathers, offered a severe and lengthy critique of anti-Semitism in an October 1939 essay, calling it “unjust, brutal, and opposed to the teachings of Christ.”⁵⁶ Large circulation papers such as the *Michigan Catholic*, the *Catholic Mind*, the *Boston Pilot* and the *Catholic Worker* offered similar sentiments.⁵⁷ Virtually no paper stood ‘silent’ on the issue. Even the *Brooklyn Tablet*, which had offered support to the anti-Semitic Father Charles Coughlin throughout the 1930’s, presented denunciations of Nazi racialism.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ ‘Anti-Semitism Would End in General Bigotry’, *Catholic Action of the South*, May 1939, 2.

⁵⁶ *Catholic World*, ‘Catholics and Anti-Semitism’, October 1939, 175.

⁵⁷ See, for example, *The Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘We Pray for All Victims of Persecution’, 19 November 1938; *Our Sunday Visitor*, ‘Day of Prayer for Racial Victims Is Asked by Prelates’, 20 November 1938, 14; *New World* ‘Germany’, 25 November 1938, 2; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Father Coughlin Denounces All Persecutions’, 26 November 1938; *Michigan Catholic*, ‘Msgr. Ryan Raps Nazi Persecution of Jews’, 7 July 1938; *Michigan Catholic*, ‘Jews Thank Pope for Aid Given Them: Pius XII Reiterates Stand of Vatican Against Persecution and Hatred’, 6 December 1945.

⁵⁸ The *Brooklyn Tablet*, edited by the ‘Coughlinites’ Patrick Scanlan, did present reportage and opinion that was often anti-Jewish in its slant, but on the question of Nazi persecutions of European Jews, the paper did fall into line with the expressions of solidarity found in most of the Catholic press. There were exceptions to this, however. In December 1938, for example, the *Brooklyn Tablet* suggested that Catholic sympathy for the Jewish plight had actually intensified the persecution of the Church in Germany, sharpening “the vilification of the Church in the Nazi press directed particularly against His Holiness Pope Pius XI and the German hierarchy.” It was an implicit suggestion that sympathy for the Jewish plight was detrimental to Catholic interests. See *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Sympathy for Jews is Resented: Catholics Assailed in Germany for Christian Spirit’, 3 December 1938, 2.

Expressions of wartime solidarity were not limited to the American Catholic press. Catholic leaders such as Ryan, Mitty, Gannon and Sheehy, building on their efforts following the *Kristallnacht*, continued to decry Nazi brutality throughout the war. Official pronouncements and statements from the various Christian denominations, including Roman Catholics, against the policy of anti-Semitism were compiled in 1943 by the National Conference of Christians and Jews (NCCJ), and were published and widely distributed in a pamphlet entitled *Christians Protest Persecutions*.⁵⁹ In an address to Detroit civic forum in June 1944, Archbishop Edward Mooney hailed the heroism of the victims of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, and denounced Nazi brutality in clear terms. Mooney further expressed revulsion at the plight of Jews through the centuries, and outlined the need for Catholics to “give full play to our instinctive revulsion and horror against this latest instance of mass cruelty in the story of the Warsaw Ghetto, to prepare ourselves for the impending task of putting together the shattered pieces of a war-torn world.”⁶⁰ In pointing up the anti-Christian as well as anti-Semitic elements of Nazism, he concluded “May we not hope that in the fires of a common tribulation new bonds of human solidarity and mutual goodwill are being forged between Catholics and Jews?” In the same speech, Mooney stressed the incompatibility of anti-Semitism and Christian faith. “Catholic teaching formally and explicitly condemns ant-Semitism,” he intoned.

⁵⁹ Various authors, *Christians Protest Persecutions* (New York, 1943). The pamphlet was a compilation of the denunciations of a number of Christian groups on Nazi persecution of European Jewry. Though a majority of the denominations quoted were under the umbrella of the (Protestant) Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, the pamphlet included the American Catholic bishops’ annual statement for 1942, ‘Victory and Peace’, which denounced the persecution of both Christians and Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe.

⁶⁰ ‘Archbishop Scores Attack on Jews’, *The Michigan Catholic*, 8 June 1944, 1. See also Archbishop Mooney Speech’, June 1944, Archives of the Archdiocese of Detroit (Hereafter AAD), Bishop Edward Mooney Papers, Box 42, File 2.

“Catholic teaching directly emphasizes the dignity of the human person of which anti-Semitism outrages. Catholic teaching exalts the historic religious role of the Jewish people, and glories in the heritage from Judaism which is an essential element in Christianity.” He then paraphrased Pope Pius XI, who in a decree of 1928 had stated that “anti-Semitism is not compatible with the sublime reality of the faith. It is a movement in which Catholics cannot participate. We are all spiritually Semites.”⁶¹ Mooney’s sentiments, however, also implicitly alluded to Roman Catholic positions on Zionism, even when pleading for closer Catholic-Jewish cooperation. “In the heroism of Christians who have so often risked and not so infrequently given their lives to rescue their even more unfortunate Jewish brothers, may we not find an augury that when the agony is over Jews and Christians will work together to write a brighter page of history in liberated Europe, and particularly in Poland which has, at least, the historic glory of offering Jews a haven of refuge when they were driven out of other countries?”⁶²

Fulton Sheen, the future archbishop and ‘television priest’, and leading voice of Catholic America both before and after the war, also tackled the issue of Nazi anti-Semitism on his weekly radio program, *The Catholic Hour*, which had attracted an audience topping one million by the early 1940’s.⁶³ In a broadcast delivered on 10 January 1943, Sheen reflected on Pius XII’s Christmas allocution of 1942, in which the

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Sheen’s *The Catholic Hour*, which aired from 1930 to 1950, was followed in 1951 by the Catholic television program *Life is Worth Living*, aired first by DuMont and later by ABC, which attracted a wide viewership (estimated at nearly 10 million by 1956), and which earned Sheen an Emmy Award in 1952 as ‘Most Outstanding Television Personality.’

pontiff had bemoaned the totalitarian and militaristic ideologies which were destroying Europe both physically and spiritually.⁶⁴ Sheen's address, however, denounced Jewish persecutions more directly than Rome had. He impugned Nazi racialism as a policy based wholly on the warped ideology of a despotic madman, with no grounding in scientific fact. In this vein, he deplored the persecution of European Jews in the most explicit terms. To Sheen, Nazism, like communism, denied the basic equality of all humans, a pillar of Nazism that had led to Jewish persecution. "The disdain of the human person," he observed, "is the first dogma of all totalitarian systems. It explains why the individual Jew has no value or rights under Nazism: Because he is not a member of the revolutionary race. The persecution of Jews arises, therefore, not because, as Hitler first claimed, they were too wealthy, but simply because they were not Nordic."⁶⁵ Like Maritain, Sheen linked Nazi disdain for Judaism and Christianity. Speaking at a November 1942 meeting of the NCCJ, he announced that the world had entered into a new historical phase, "in which there will be no persecution of Jews without persecution of Christians."⁶⁶ In light of this view, he implored American Catholics to abandon lingering isolationist sympathies and support the war effort. "What we were once intolerant to as a wicked idea," he urged, "we must now be intolerant to as a deed." Interestingly, Sheen appeared to be doing what many of the Pope's critics were demanding- namely to issue specific, explicit denunciations of Nazi crimes rather than the vague allusions and abstractions of the encyclicals. Sheen's sentiments, in fact, were

⁶⁴ Fulton Sheen, 'The Thing We Are Fighting Against', *The Catholic Hour*, 10 January 1943, <http://fultonsheen.com/Fulton-Sheen-articles>. (Accessed 12 January 2010).

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *America*, 28 November 1942, 200.

reflective of the dual nature of the American Church. His words reflected, on the one hand, the pronouncements of Rome, as expressed through the encyclicals, but they also spoke to the American reality of confronting the Nazi threat, and to the need to rally American Catholics to the war effort. It was the melding of two loyalties, as it were, at once both Roman Catholic and American.

The American Catholic episcopate similarly expressed revulsion at the fate of European Jewry. At a 1940 meeting of the National Conference for Christians and Jews (NCCJ), Bishop Robert Lucey of Amarillo, Texas declared that “We, as Christians, as citizens, as human beings, must cry out against the horror of this Nazi [debauchery] against Jews.” In warning his listeners against the false comfort of isolationism, and in rallying his audience to the defence of “Western civilization”, he intoned that “what is happening to the people of Europe is our business.”⁶⁷ The American bishop’s annual statement for 1941, issued through the Washington-based NCWC and titled ‘The Crisis of Christianity’, addressed the evils of “totalitarian systems”, singled out Nazism and Communism as ideological forces which threatened both Christianity and indeed Western civilization, and implicitly urged American Catholic to support the larger effort to defeat these “systems.” The statement also referred specifically to the suffering of Europe’s Jews, stating that “Our sympathy goes out again to the peoples of those countries who have been crushed under the heel of the invader, and indeed, to all upon whom war has imposed so heavy a burden of suffering and sacrifice. We cannot too strongly condemn the inhuman treatment to which the Jewish people have been subjected to in many

⁶⁷ Saul E. Bronder *Social Justice and Church Authority: The Public Life of Archbishop Robert E Lucey* (Philadelphia, 1982): 63.

countries.”⁶⁸ The bishops annual statement for 1942, entitled ‘Victory and Peace’, addressed a range of themes. It endorsed the war effort emphatically, signalling a definitive end of the hierarchy’s lingering debate on isolationism. It urged an allied victory under American stewardship as the only outcome that could guarantee an enduring peace, in which Christian principles would guide and inform the international order. The statement also deplored Nazi brutality, and specifically addressed the question of European Jews.

...We feel a deep sense of revulsion against the cruel indignities heaped upon the Jews in conquered countries and upon defenceless peoples not of our faith. We join with our brother bishops in subjugated France in a statement attributed to them: “Deeply moved by the mass arrests and maltreatment of the Jews, we cannot stifle the cry of our conscience. In the name of humanity and Christian principles our voice is raised in favour of imprescriptible rights of human nature.” We raise our voice in protest against despotic tyrants who have lost all sense of humanity by condemning thousands of innocent victims in concentration camps, and by permitting unnumbered persons to die of starvation.⁶⁹

Signing these statements was a cross-section of the nation’s most prominent churchmen, including Archbishops Francis Spellman of New York, Samuel Stritch of Chicago, Edward Mooney of Detroit, John Mitty of San Francisco and John McNicholas of Cincinnati.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ See Hugh J. Nolan, ed. *Pastoral Letters of the United States Catholic Bishops, 1941-1961* (Vol. II) (Washington, 1984): 28-35.

⁶⁹ Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, *Statement on Victory and Peace*, 14 November 1942. See Raphael M. Huber, ed. *Our Bishops Speak: National Pastorals and Annual Statements of the Hierarchy of the United States* (Milwaukee, 1952): 110-114.

⁷⁰ Other signatories included Archbishop Joseph Rummel of New Orleans, and Bishops John Gannon of Erie, John Noll of Fort Wayne, Karl Alter of Toledo, and John Duffy of Buffalo.

American Catholic positions on political Zionism, however, remained unchanged through the war, and adhered closely to Rome's longstanding position. If American Catholic expressions of sympathy for the Jewish plight were expressed in terms starker than those emanating from Rome, there was no substantive deviation on the question of a return of the Jews to Palestine. The Zionist goal of a Jewish home in Palestine was an aspiration that Roman Catholic leaders, both at the Vatican and in the United States, continued to oppose on historical and theological grounds, despite the tragedy of the Holocaust. On the whole, however, opposition to the Zionist program was a policy discreetly espoused by the American Catholic leaders during the war, reflective of Rome's public stance on the issue. An analysis of the wartime *Osservatore Romano* reveals little on the question of a national home for European Jews, despite the fact that the Holocaust severely underscored the growing importance of that very question. Vatican ambivalence can be traced to its preoccupation during most of the war: namely to maintain an apolitical neutrality designed to ensure the survival of the institutional Church through the conflict's darkest days. Given the highly fluid and rapidly evolving progression of the war, particularly to 1943, Vatican policymakers preferred to keep discreet any public stance on the future of Palestine. Privately, however, Pius XII and his Secretary of State, Cardinal Luigi Maglione, continued to express severe reservations about the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, fearing a loss of control over Christian sites in the Holy Land, and concerned with the possibility of a Jewish 'beachhead' for communist influence and infiltration in the Near East.⁷¹ These sentiments were shared by a number of the Vatican's most powerful Cardinals and diplomats, including Angelo

⁷¹ See Morley, *Vatican Diplomacy and the Jews During the Holocaust*, 205-208.

Roncalli, the future Pope John XXIII, who as nuncio to Istanbul was noted for his efforts to save Jewish lives, but was unreceptive to the solutions posed by political Zionism.⁷² In a September 1943 letter to Maglione, Roncalli expressed discomfort about the degree to which Vatican aid to Jews would be later considered an endorsement of their “messianic dream”, adding that the “reconstruction of the Kingdom of Judah and the Israelites would not create a utopia.”⁷³

A similar circumspection was exercised by the leading American Catholic figures. When the various organs of the American Church did weigh in on the question of Zionism, however, its support was not forthcoming. A survey of a cross-section of the American Catholic press reveals a remarkable unanimity on the question of Palestine. As the war approached, and as tensions between Jews and Arabs in Palestine became more acute in 1938 and 1939, *America* examined the competing claims of Jew and Arab in Palestine, favouring neither for absolute political jurisdiction of the territory.⁷⁴ James E. Coleran, a Jesuit scholar and author of these articles, compared the claims of Jews and Arabs, and sympathized with Britain in the precarious role she occupied as the Mandatory Power. While denying Arab claims to complete control of Palestine, Coleran did highlight the fact that Arab claims were based on a 1500 year occupation of the

⁷² Roncalli’s efforts to assist Jews during the war were extensive, and were highlighted by several later scholars. Saul Friedlander notes that the Zionist Archives in Jerusalem contain a large number of documents detailing Roncalli’s intercessions on behalf of persecuted Jews. See Friedlander’s *Pius XII and the Third Reich*, 222. See also Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews*, 145-181, 316-326.

⁷³ Roncalli, (Apostolic Delegate to Istanbul) to Maglione, Vatican, 4 September 1943, *Actes et Documents*, Volume 9, 469.

⁷⁴ See *America*, ‘While Jew and Arab Battle for Control of Palestine, 17 December 1938, 244-247; *America*, ‘England is Perplexed by Jew and Arab in Palestine, 24 December 1938, 272-274; *America*, ‘Palestine Homeland, 3 June 1939, 180; *America*, ‘The White Paper for Jews and Arabs’, 10 June 1939, 199-200.

territory, and opined that if the Jews were to have any kind of national home in Palestine, it should have to be in consultation with, and with the consent of, Palestinian Arabs.⁷⁵

Given the rate at which Jews were successful in supplanting Arabs in Palestine, both in numbers and in economic and political control, Coleran observed, he doubted that any such co-operation could exist in a new state.

While he agreed that both Jew and Arab could rightfully appeal to the Wilsonian principle of national self-determination, he questioned whether Palestine could be considered the legitimate homeland of the global Jewish diaspora. In reflecting on Zionist ambitions, he observed:

...Even after the Romans finally destroyed their nation they never ceased to look upon Palestine as their land, and for the past centuries since that destruction countless Jews have longed to return, and many have actually filtered back to live and die in the 'Land of Israel.' Some seem to think that these facts constitute a sort of title to the land. However, if the fact that a people desire to regain their land, and a few do return to it, constitutes a just title to the land, what havoc might be wrought of the boundaries of more than one nation today, not excluding the United States!⁷⁶

Coleran did not deny the need for a Jewish national home, particularly in the context of escalating Nazi brutality, but he did suggest, as did the Vatican both during and after the war, that a Jewish state be established somewhere other than Palestine. "Some part of this large earth," he opined, "should be given to them as their own. Some colony should be given to them where they would be their own masters, and never again to fear that the people among them, where they live, would someday rise against them

⁷⁵ *America*, 'While Jew and Arab Battle for Control of Palestine', 17 December 1938, 245.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

and send them bleeding and impoverished to seek the calculating charity of strange lands.”⁷⁷ He questioned, however, whether Palestine possessed the “absorptive capacity” for such an endeavour. “All must admit,” he observed, “that Palestine cannot hope to provide for all of these. The more prosperous nations are all hesitating about throwing wide their doors to these unfortunates. Why insist that a poor Palestine do it?”⁷⁸ Coleran’s notions on Palestine’s “absorptive capacity” stood close to the Vatican’s own position on the future of the *Terra Santa*, and were emblematic of the growing convergence between Roman and American Catholic views on the future of Palestine.

In a later article, on the eve of war, Coleran mused critically on the increasing “force and vehemence of international Jewry,” observing that “the union of sentiment, the similarity of method, the use of propaganda, the moral pressure of Jews in every nation, particularly in the British Commonwealth and the United States, all manifest that Jewry is an international power, that it is aggressive and may be ruthless, and that it is determined to champion its interests against any and all who would question its aims.”⁷⁹ The article was a reflection of the concern, in segments of the American Catholic hierarchy, of the growing stridency, profile and effectiveness of American Zionist lobby, particularly the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA).⁸⁰ In praising the even-handed neutrality of the British ‘White Paper’ of 1939, which Zionists regarded as a hindrance to their ambitions, Coleran warned of the possible outcomes of unchecked Zionist zeal, and implicitly

⁷⁷ *America*, ‘England is Perplexed by Jew and Arab in Palestine’, 24 December 1938, 273.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *America*, ‘Palestine Homeland’, 3 June 1939, 180.

⁸⁰ On the ZOA and its successes both before and during the Second World War, see Aaron Berman, *Nazism, the Jews and American Zionism, 1933-1948* (Detroit, 1990): 41-124.

suggested that Washington act to brake Zionist demands in the interests of peace and security. “The problem of Palestine may provoke a new orientation of ideas in regard to the place of the Jewish race in world affairs. In the United States, likewise, there is in process a new Jewish consciousness, characterized by militancy and acumen. This, also, requires a new American evaluation and orientation.”⁸¹

The *Brooklyn Tablet* weighed in similarly on the ‘Palestine Question.’ In a number of articles published on the eve of the war, the paper presented a decidedly Arabist perspective on the struggle for Palestine. It characterized Arab nationalism as primarily defensive in character, in contrast to the hegemonic ambitions of Zionism, and was supported by the majority of the Palestinian population, in contrast to the minority position of the Zionists.⁸² As did *America*, the *Brooklyn Tablet* opined that “little Palestine” had reached its “absorptive capacity”, and that further Jewish immigration to the territory would only serve to deepen political tensions there. The Arab struggle was likened to “the American struggle against British imperialism and the fight of George Washington and his men against that same imperial power. They, too, wished to secure themselves life, liberty and happiness.”⁸³ The *Brooklyn Tablet*’s articles emphasized the fact that Palestinian Christians also opposed Zionist designs for the territory, echoing Vatican concerns that Christian rights were being trampled by Zionist aggression in the

⁸¹ *America*, ‘Palestine Homeland’, 3 June 1939, 180.

⁸² *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Sets Forth Arab Side of Conflict: Palestine Situation Has More Than One Angle’, 24 December 1938, 3.

⁸³ *Ibid.* In this article, the *Brooklyn Tablet* presented segments of the radio broadcast of Fuad Mufarrij, academic and General Secretary of the Arab National Bureau in Damascus. The paper’s reprinting of the speeches and journalism of Arab leaders and scholars reveals its implicitly anti-Zionist editorial line, maintained both before and after the Second World War.

Terra Santa. On this theme, the paper quoted Dr. George Ibrahim Kheirallah, a noted Iranian academic and Secretary General of the Arab National League, who observed that “One hundred thousand Christian Arabs stand should to shoulder with their Muslim brothers- patriarchs, Bishops, priests, and ministers, all standing as one nation threatened by this ruthless treatment. Our forefathers once before generously fertilized the sacred soil of Palestine with their blood. May we be spared the necessity of doing it again.”⁸⁴ Such allusions to a new crusade for the Holy Land would appear often in the Catholic press from the beginning of the war onward.

As the oppression of European Jewry turned to violence and murder in the early years of the war, Zionist leaders began to regard the emergency faced by their co-religionists as their last best chance to push for the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine. The American entry into the war, furthermore, and the strength and vibrancy of American Zionist organizations, the ZOA foremost among them, created a shift in the focal point of Zionist lobbying from London to Washington during the war years. Zionists had been bitterly disappointed by the British ‘White Paper’ of 1939, and British reluctance to support a proposed Jewish army marked a sea-change in relations between London and leading Zionist groups. The American-Palestine Committee, which had been created in 1932 to foment high-level support for a Jewish state among non-Jewish leaders and politicians, claimed 15,000 members by 1941, among them nearly two thirds of the United States Senate, and many members of the House of Representatives. Though Britain remained the Mandatory Power, the United States increasingly became the centre

⁸⁴ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Arabs Set Forth Their Viewpoint: Palestine Problem is Shown to Have Another Side’, 18 February 1939, 4.

of the Zionist lobby, its leaders cognizant that the American government would likely dictate the terms of an allied victory, and buoyed by the growing support of a large Jewish-American community. The gathering of the leading Zionist organizations at New York's Biltmore Hotel in May 1942, attended by Chaim Weizmann and David Ben-Gurion, signalled a definitive shift that would see Washington as the new centre of the international Zionist campaign. The platform of the 'Biltmore Conference' not only advocated for unlimited Jewish emigration to Palestine, but also forcefully endorsed the creation of a sovereign Jewish state. Biltmore delegates saw this as not only a solution to the immediate problem of Nazi persecutions, but as a permanent solution to Jewish dislocation since the time of the Roman Empire.⁸⁵

The rising tide of sympathy for Zionism in the United States did not escape the attention of the Vatican. In May 1943, Cardinal Maglione instructed Amleto Cicognani, the apostolic delegate in Washington, to keep the Holy See apprised of any developments in the Zionist lobby, and to outline any shifts in public opinion toward or against the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine.⁸⁶ To this end, Cicognani filed several reports to Rome on the emergence of new and robust Zionist associations in 1943 and 1944, including the

⁸⁵ As the prominent Zionist Abba Hillel Silver expressed at the Biltmore Conference, "...what has been the basic fact in Jewish tragedy right through the ages, the fact of our national homelessness, of our abnormal political status in the world, and that now, after a second World War, in which Jews by the millions are already casualties...in a war in which Jews suffer doubly and trebly in relation to every other people, that...the ultimate solution of the Jewish problem must finally be sounded, and the ultimate solution is the establishment of a Jewish Nation in Palestine." See Berman, *Nazism, the Jews and American Zionism*, 89.

⁸⁶ Maglione to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, Cicognani, 18 May 1943, *Actes et Documents*, 9: 301-303. In this letter, Maglione outlined the Holy See's traditional opposition to the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine, which centred on Catholic fears of a loss of control of the Holy Places, concerns that Palestine had reached its 'absorptive capacity', and that any granting of Jewish territorial rights in the territory may inspire Arab national movements as well, further complicating Catholic rights in the Palestine.

‘Hebrew Committee of National Liberation’, which included among its leadership the revisionist Zionist Eri Jabotinsky, and Peter Bergson, a prominent Zionist who had escaped Nazi-occupied Poland in 1939, and who tirelessly lobbied the American government for assistance to persecuted Jewry.⁸⁷ Other groups identified by Cicognani, with the assistance of the NCWC, included the ‘American Friends of a Jewish Palestine’ and the ‘American League for a Free Palestine’. In his reports Cicognani noted, with only half-hearted relief, that mainstream Zionist organizations such as the ZOA and the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC) considered these new groups overtly aggressive and potentially disruptive, and sought to exclude them from serious negotiations on the future of Palestine.⁸⁸

He further urged Cicognani to remind the American bishops of the dangers of political Zionism, and to delineate these concerns, where possible, through the American diocesan press, particularly as sympathy for Zionism continued to expand in the United States. Early in 1944, the Cardinal Secretary of State echoed these sentiments to Cicognani, urging him to “appeal to the sentiments of the Government and public opinion of America for the full freedom of people, and mention also the prestige which the U.S. might achieve from their involvement in such a just cause as supporting the Christian

⁸⁷ See, for example, Amleto Cicognani to Luigi Maglione, 11 July 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18. In correspondence with Cicognani, Bergson requested the support of the Holy See and the American Church in the establishment of a ‘Hebrew Homeland’ in Palestine, and informed the apostolic delegate that he would “take the liberty of calling, from time to time, on Your Excellency and on other representatives of the Holy to discuss various matters of concern to the Hebrew Nation in this time of its most desperate crisis.” Cicognani offered no response. See Peter Bergson to Amleto Cicognani, 27 June 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

⁸⁸ Cicognani to Maglione, 6 July 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18. A *New York Times* article of 18 May 1944 quoted ZOA president Dr. Israel Goldstein’s characterization of the creation of Bergson’s group as “buffoonery” and “comic opera drollery.”

communities in the Middle East and civilization.”⁸⁹ In June 1943, Maglione forwarded the Vatican’s 1922 *Aide memoire* on Palestine to Michael Ready, the General Secretary of the NCWC.⁹⁰ The memo, which delineated the Vatican’s opposition to a Jewish Palestine on theological, historical and political grounds, was evidence that the Holocaust had barely altered the Vatican’s formal position of Zionism, and was intended to act as a template for American Catholic responses to the ‘Palestine Question.’ In May 1944, Cicognani forwarded to Ready another memo on the Vatican’s position, stating that “since the question is one of much discussion at the present time, it may be well for the point of view of the Holy See to be brought to the attention of the Most Reverend Bishops.”⁹¹

On the same date, Cicognani forwarded a copy of the memo directly to Joseph Rummel, the German-born Archbishop of New Orleans, who had been appointed by the Vatican as the Chairman of the Catholic Committee for Refugees in 1941.⁹² Rummel’s case, in fact, reveals the extent to which the Vatican expected the American bishops to speak with one voice on the question of Palestine and on Zionism generally. The apostolic delegate rebuked Rummel for publicly expressing distaste with the limits placed on Jewish immigration to Palestine in the British ‘White Paper’ in an open letter to Rabbi Emil Leipziger. Rummel’s sentiments were reported on in the local diocesan press. “If the Jews needed protection in 1917 and the solace of a homeland in 1922”, wrote the

⁸⁹ Cardinal Maglione to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, 18 January 1944, in *Actes et Documents*, 11:101. Quoted in Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Palestinian-Israeli Conflict*, 83.

⁹⁰ Amleto Cicognani to Michael Ready, 15 June 1943, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

⁹¹ Amleto Cicognani to Michael Ready, 19 May 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

⁹² Amleto Cicognani to Michael Ready, 19 March 1941, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 72, File 2.

Archbishop in February 1944, “they stand in greater need of help after all the sufferings endured in Europe, and Winston Churchill now has the opportunity to unmake what, in 1939, he criticized so vehemently in parliament as the violation of a pledge.”⁹³ Cicognani expressed to Rummel that he could “understand the humanitarian motives which induced [you] to make the statement referred to. I believe it will be useful for [your] future guidance to know the attitude of the Holy See, and to consider certain Catholic and Christian aspects of the problem which are commonly neglected in the public agitation being carried on in the United States for a Jewish Home Land.”⁹⁴ The apostolic delegate added that he hoped Rummel, in his influential capacity as Archbishop, would “be in a position to utilize this statement of policy on many occasions.”⁹⁵

The ‘statement of policy’ forwarded to Rummel, which was identical to that sent to the NCWC, amounted to a summary of the Holy See’s longstanding ‘Palestine policy’, positions barely changed since the end of World War One. The statement outlined the Holy See’s recent efforts to spare European Jewry the worst of Nazi wrath, but stated that Jewish suffering did not preclude the Vatican’s longstanding opposition to a Jewish homeland in Palestine, as expressed by Pope Benedict XV at a 1919 Consistory of Cardinals, and re-iterated by Pope Pius XI in his 1922 *Aide memoire* to the League of Nations. On the ‘Holy Places’, the memo emphasized the importance of Catholic control, stating that generations of Popes had “made every effort to keep them from falling into the hands of infidels, and because their possession had now become secure, all

⁹³ ‘Wants Holy Land Open to Jews’, *The Michigan Catholic*, 9 February 1944, 1.

⁹⁴ Amleto Cicognani to Joseph Rummel, 19 May 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

precautions must be taken to see that it be protected and strengthened.”⁹⁶ On Palestine itself, it stated that “Catholics the world over are piously devoted to this country, hallowed as it was by the earthly presence of the Redeemer, and esteemed as it is the cradle of Christianity. If the greater part of Palestine is given to the Jewish people, this would be a severe blow to the religious attachment of Catholics to this land. To have the Jewish people in the majority would be to interfere with the peaceful exercise of these rights in the Holy Land already vested in Catholics.” It further suggested that Jewish occupation of Palestine two millennia previous did not legitimize a modern claim to the territory, and it echoed a familiar Vatican refrain that while Jews would certainly require a postwar home, that Palestine was not ideal. “If a ‘Hebrew Home’ is desired,” it concluded, “it would not be too difficult to find a more fitting territory than Palestine. With an increase in the Jewish population there, grave, new international problems might arise. Catholics the world over might be aroused. The Holy See might then be hindered in its care of the Holy Places, and it might be kept from giving charitable assistance in the measure which it would wish.” On 9 June, Ready forwarded copies of the memo to the entire American episcopate.⁹⁷ Rummel made no public utterances on the question of Jewish refugees and Palestine after February 1944, despite his central role as Chairman of the Catholic Committee for Refugees.

In the wake of Rummel’s censure, some bishops took the initiative to make certain that diocesan priests were fully cognizant of the Vatican’s policy. On 24 July,

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Michael Ready to the Ordinaries, Titulars, Auxiliaries and Administrators, 9 June 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

Thomas McLaughlin, bishop of Paterson (New Jersey), forwarded his priests a memo outlining the Church's historic, and unaltered, position on the "Jewish Homeland Idea."⁹⁸ He instructed clergy to discourage parishioners from "participating in the current agitation on the British White Paper to the end that Britain may relax her immigration laws to Palestine," stating that as the issue "was economic and political rather than strictly religious...the Church and its organs and representatives should not as such take sides or make commitments on this matter." The letter was far from a neutral statement, however, clearly delineating the Vatican's historic position on the Holy Land. In addition to reiterating the points in the NCWC's 'Rummel memo' of 9 June, McLaughlin added that "There is every reason to fear that were the Jewish people in the majority in that region, there would be interference with the peaceful exercise of the present recognized rights vested in Catholic in the territory. A noteworthy increase in the permanent Jewish population there gives fear lest grave new international problems might arise. Catholics all over the world might be aroused with the result that the Holy See might have difficulty in caring for the places in the Holy Land."⁹⁹ In paraphrasing the Cardinal Gasparri's 1922 *aide memoire*, which remained the backbone of Vatican policy on Palestine, it continued that "there is no principle in history or justice to establish the necessity of the return of a people to a country which they left nineteen centuries ago. There are other places on this earth where a 'Hebrew Home' could be set up without causing international repercussions and difficulties." In concluding, McLaughlin warned his priests to remain cognizant of the papal line, while avoiding entanglements that a

⁹⁸ Thomas McLaughlin to Michael Ready, 24 July 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18. See also enclosure, 1-4.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 3.

defined public stance might produce. “In a word, we are to defend Catholic interests and not lend ourselves to propaganda for a cause (lifting British immigration quotas) which has no bearing upon our life here, but contains the seeds of difficulties for the authorities of the Church in maintaining recognized rights.”¹⁰⁰

Though Catholic leaders were wary of trumpeting an opposition to Zionism too loudly, they were also concerned about the rising tide of support for it in the United States, particularly among non-Jewish groups and in Congress. The Vatican, too, was aware of the gravity of losing the battle for public opinion to the Zionists in these years, and was keen to enlist the support of the American Catholic press on the issue, prompting an August 1943 request from Cardinal Maglione that Catholic journals more clearly delineate Rome’s concerns on the Zionist program.¹⁰¹ American Catholic journals that did comment on the ‘Palestine Question’ from the summer of 1943 forward did not disappoint him. The Catholic press cast a dubious shadow over the Zionist idea, and continuously drew a line between the denunciation of anti-Semitism, and support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. The tragedy of the Holocaust, and the daunting refugee crisis that it spawned, did not alter mainstream American Catholic positions on political Zionism, which continued to be regarded as a dangerous experiment, and one which, in combination with an emergent Arab national movement, threatened the position of Roman Catholics in the Holy Land. *America* continued its assault on Zionism long after the news of Nazi ‘death camps’ had become common knowledge. In an October 1944 editorial, it advised that, despite the fact that European Jewry had suffered

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 4.

¹⁰¹ Luigi Maglione to Michael Ready, 16 August 1943, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 22.

disproportionately during the war, the United States should be wary of supporting “zealous Zionists.”¹⁰² The unchecked inflow of Jewish refugees, it warned, was a solution “fraught with dangers that should be recognized now.” It cautioned Washington leaders that had warmed to Zionism of the dangers of intervening in a dispute between Jews and Arabs, and cited the example of Britain, whose “fingers had been burnt by competing commitments.” In concluding, it suggested that while a home would need to be found for Europe’s displaced Jews, securing that home in Palestine would raise more problems than it would solve.¹⁰³

In a series of editorials in the fall and winter of 1945, *America* further elaborated on its opposition to Zionist demands. It decried the increasingly violent tactics employed by Zionists by the end of the war, and scolded the movement for its “violent disagreement” with British foreign policy, referring specifically to the Anglo-American Report of 1945, which many Zionists found as unpalatable as the 1939 ‘White Paper.’¹⁰⁴ *America* advocated an international settlement for the territory, and opined that, in resorting to violence, it “appeared that the Zionist nationalists no longer fight the battle primarily to seek a refuge for persecuted brethren, but rather to further nationalist ambitions.” While the journal didn’t fault Jews for seeking a place of refuge following the war, it argued that the Jewish dilemma was a humanitarian question, not a political

¹⁰² *America*, ‘Palestinian Question’, 10 October 1944, 210.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.* The editorial concluded, “They deserve justice and charity; but securing it for them brings up problems- one of which is the Palestinian question.”

¹⁰⁴ *America*, ‘Zionists and Palestine’, 13 October 1945, 39-40. The Anglo-American Report did recommend an increase to Jewish immigration quotas to Palestine (to 100,000 annually), and did annul restrictions on land sales to Jewish immigrants, but it did not meet the demands of most leading Zionists, who demanded that the emergency of Jewish displacement required an ‘open door’ policy for Palestine.

one, highlighting that “unity among [Jews] is based on religion rather than nationality.” On that score, it advised against “a nationalistic treatment of a humanitarian problem.”¹⁰⁵ It advised that the ‘Palestine Question’ be turned over to an international body, such as the UN, a position the journal claimed it shared with a majority of Jews who, it suggested, found the claims of Zionists “embarrassing and politically dangerous.” In concluding, it suggested a number of alternatives to the Zionist program, including the reinstatement of Jews as free citizens of their homelands, increased immigration quotas by Britain and the United States, and slight modifications to the 1939 ‘White Paper’ to allow more Jews to seek refuge in Palestine.¹⁰⁶

A number of other Catholic journals also advised referring the ‘Palestine Question’ to an international body such as the UN, warning that leaving Jew and Arab to their own devices would only lead to conflict and bloodshed. In a series of articles in the *Boston Pilot* and the *Michigan Catholic*, Monsignor Michael Assemani, the representative of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem to Washington, raised these and other issues.¹⁰⁷ Assemani’s articles emphasized that while Jews and Arabs had legitimate historical and sentimental claims to the Holy Land, so too did Christians, and he implored that their rights could not be undermined by the larger Jewish-Arab struggle. The Holy

¹⁰⁵ *America*, ‘Palestine’, 1 December 1945, 239.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 240.

¹⁰⁷ See the *Boston Pilot*, ‘Solution of Palestine Is Allied Problem: Religious Attachment is at the Root of Arab-Jewish Conflict,’ 1 December 1945, 1,3; the *Michigan Catholic*, ‘Christian Rights in Holy Land Ignored in Arab-Jewish Dispute: Need Allied Decision to End Trouble, 29 November 1945, 3. Assemani had spent most of his clerical career in the Near East, and served as the pastor of the Syrian-rite Church of the Sacred Heart, in Michigan City, Indiana, at the time of his appointment as representative of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem. The Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem was established by the Crusaders in 1099, and endured until Muslim defeat in 1217. It was re-established by Pope Pius IX in 1847, and the patriarch remained the most important Catholic administrator in Palestine into the 20th century.

Land was sacred to Christians, he asserted, because “Jesus was born in Bethlehem, walked the dirt roads to Nazareth, through Samaria and to Jerusalem. It is the land which witnessed His miracles, the country in whose language He preached. It was on Mt. Calvary that He was crucified. Palestine is the cradle of Christianity.”¹⁰⁸ In concluding, Assemani hinted that Catholics would be prepared to take a firm stand in defending the neutrality of Christian holy sites in Palestine. “From the 12th century onward,” he intoned, “Christians have fought and died to regain control of the holy sites in Palestine. And while the crusades of the armed Knights who went out to fight the non-believers now belong to history, the Christian world is no less keenly interested in the preservation of its holy places in Palestine.”¹⁰⁹ His appeal to Christian historical and spiritual ties to the Holy Land were echoed by the Vatican in the early postwar years, and were intended to elicit an emotional response in American Catholic attitudes towards the struggle for Palestine. By re-emphasizing Christianity’s own ancestral stake in the territory, the diocesan press helped to shape Catholic opinion for later Vatican claims for the internationalization of the Holy Places, a focal point of postwar Catholic efforts.

An April 1945 press release by Anthony Bruya, an American Franciscan who served as the Palestine correspondent for the NCWC’s news service, emphasized the notion that no suitable solution for the territory could be found that did not address Jewish, Muslim and Christian concerns in the Holy Land. In addressing the theme of Palestine’s ‘absorptive capacity’, and implicitly questioning Jewish primacy in the territory, he observed that “talk about providing a home for the persecuted millions of

¹⁰⁸ *Boston Pilot*, ‘Solution of Palestine is Allied Problem’, 1 December 1945, 3.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

Europe is all very good and edifying, but is 10,000 square mile Palestine able to remedy, or even to alleviate, the plight of those unhappy peoples- by no means limited to those of the Jewish race, but knowing neither racial nor religious lines?”¹¹⁰ Bruya further criticized a proposed Anglo-American partition plan for Palestine, inspired by a solution presented by the influential London *Economist*, which would have ceded the Zionists a large portion of Palestine, including important Christian centres, save only Jenin and Nablus.¹¹¹ Though the plan was never made official nor implemented, Bruya’s dispatches were reprinted in the American diocesan press under headlines such as ‘Christian Rights Overlooked’ and ‘Christianity Ignored in Verbal Battles Over Arab, Jewish Control of the Holy Land’.¹¹² In concluding, Bruya re-emphasized the notion that no solution was acceptable that did not preserve Christian control of the Holy Sites in Palestine. “Any attempted solution of the ‘Palestine Question,’” he declared, “which does not provide a definitive and practical safeguard for the Christian position here, and hence for the peculiarly Catholic rights which are as old as Christianity itself, will be no solution at all. Such a make-shift will merely postpone the day when a real solution will have to be faced by all concerned.”¹¹³

¹¹⁰ ‘Failure to Safeguard Christian Rights Will Prolong Solution of ‘Palestine Question’: Warns Against Any Plan Which Would Ignore Sacred Character of Holy Places and Desecrate Homeland of the Saviour’, 23 April 1945, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

¹¹¹ See *The Economist*, ‘Policy for Palestine’, 29 September 1945, 450-451.

¹¹² See, for example, the *Michigan Catholic*, 29 November 1945; the *Boston Pilot*, 1 December 1945; the *Brooklyn Tablet*, 1 December 1945.

¹¹³ ‘Failure to Safeguard Christian Rights Will Prolong Solution of ‘Palestine Question’, 23 April 1945, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

As the war drew to a close, and as the Palestine question was about to enter a decisive new phase, American Catholic opposition to Zionism had become firmly entrenched, despite the full airing of the tragedy of the Holocaust by 1945. It was a position, moreover, that drew direct inspiration from the Vatican itself. The political lobby of the American bishops on Mexico, Spain, Ethiopia and, most recently, the allied bombing of Rome, was set to press its case on the question of Palestine. American Catholic anti-Zionist rhetoric was about to be applied as concrete political pressure. It would contend, however, with an increasingly powerful American Zionist lobby, which similarly sought to shape Washington's policy on the fate of the Holy Land.

Chapter 3

“Impatient Zionism” and the Transnational Catholic Crusade for the Holy Land

The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of the most crucial historical phase of the two thousand year struggle for Palestine. In short order the horrors of the Holocaust, and the refugee crisis it had spawned, became widely known, creating significant pockets of sympathy for Zionism, even among groups previously benign or hostile to the idea. This would come to include not only a majority of American Jewry, but also the new President, Harry S. Truman, and a large group of senators and congressmen. As the tide of sympathy for Zionism rose in the United States, British mandatory control of Palestine rapidly weakened, as developments in the territory and the wider region became difficult to manage for the circumscribed power. As a result, the Zionist lobby became increasingly focused on Washington, as it became evident that the American government, the preeminent political, economic and military power in the West, and rapidly warming to the idea of a Jewish Palestine, would be instrumental in securing such an end.

The Vatican and the American bishops, on their part, continued to cultivate their informal yet effective ‘strategic alliance’ with Washington. On a number of postwar questions, including displaced Catholic refugees in Europe, the containment of communism (particularly in Italy), assistance to persecuted Catholics in the Soviet sphere, and American aid to Germany and Poland, Washington and the American bishops did successfully collaborate. By the summer of 1947, the working alliance between Washington and the Vatican had become explicit, and the Vatican abandoned its

historically cherished neutrality for an open alignment with the West. For this reason, the American hierarchy was hesitant to express its opposition to Zionism too explicitly, lest it hamper progress on other areas of cooperation. Developments in Palestine in 1946 and 1947, however, pushed the Zionist dream of a Jewish state much closer to reality, which in turn spurred a more focused and determined institutional response from the American Catholic Church. The 'Catholic lobby' on Palestine would finally emerge. American Catholic activism, inspired by the Vatican's own policies for the territory, now reached beyond the anti-Zionist rhetoric of the diocesan press to concrete action.

Cold War Consensus: The Vatican, American Catholics and Truman

In the early postwar years, the warming relationship between the Vatican, American Catholics and Washington continued to congeal. It was an informal alliance built on mutual dependencies. The Vatican clearly recognized the pre-eminent power of the postwar United States, and was eager to solidify its ties to the strongest international foe of communism. The Vatican similarly recognized the growing power of the American Catholic Church, not least for its financial might, and moved to place a number of American churchmen closer to the centre of power. Washington, on its part, regarded the Roman Catholic Church as a useful ideological ally in the emerging struggle against communism. Truman's maintenance of the Taylor mission after Roosevelt's death, despite the end of the war and growing Protestant opposition to it, was evidence of his commitment to preserving a Vatican channel.

After 1945, the Catholic Church in the United States entered a period of unprecedented vitality, confidence and institutional expansion. It was growth mirroring

that of the nation itself, which was embarking on an era of economic prosperity, unrivalled military preponderance and global political and cultural influence. Ardent Catholic participation in, and support of, the war effort, girded by the explicit endorsement of the American hierarchy, squelched much of the anti-Catholic bigotry of the prewar era, when critics charged that Catholic isolationism served as a cover for deeper fascist and totalitarian sympathies. The war, to be sure, contributed significantly to the ‘mainstreaming’ of American Catholics in the postwar era, blurring remaining distinctions between ‘Americanism’ and Catholicism that had persisted for over two centuries.¹ The Catholic population stood at nearly twenty-five million in 1945 (nearly 20% of the population), and would rise to over forty-five million in the next two decades, bolstered by high birth rates and waves of Catholic immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.² The Catholic clergy grew by nearly fifty percent in the decade following the war, and numbers of enrolled seminarians nearly doubled. The prosperity of postwar America was shared by the American Church. Over a hundred new hospitals, three thousand new Catholic elementary and high schools, and ninety-four new Catholic colleges were built in the postwar decade, evidence of the institutional vigour of the postwar Church. Enrolment in Catholic educational institutions rose concurrently. The 1944 G.I. Bill, which provided college or vocational training for returning servicemen, was a particular boon to Catholic colleges, which saw their enrolment increase by three

¹ On the postwar integration of Catholics into mainstream American life, see *Patrick Carey, Catholics in America: A History* (New York, 2004).

² The 1940 Federal Census pegged the American population at 132 million, a figure that topped 150 million by the 1950 Census. See Susan B Carter, Scott Sigmund Carter, Michael Haines, eds. *The Historical Statistics of the United States* (Cambridge, 2006).

hundred percent (from 92, 426 in the prewar era to 384,526 in 1950), a development that further contributed to the ‘mainstreaming’ of American Catholics after the war.³

The vitality of the postwar American Church did not escape the attention of the Vatican, which had long since recognized the unique role of American Catholic leaders to speak both as Catholics and as Americans. The steady integration of Catholics into mainstream political and social life, partially facilitated by their unflinching support of the war effort, and the pre-eminence of the United States in the postwar global order, only served to enhance Rome’s view of the growing importance of the American Church.

The institutional expansion of the postwar American Church reflected the Vatican’s growing cognizance of its power, both political and financial. Six new archdioceses were created for the United States between 1941 and 1952.⁴ To minister to its growing flock, particularly in the postwar decade, a legion of new bishops and archbishops were appointed by Rome, bolstering the American episcopate by 1950 to sixty percent above its prewar numbers. In private conversations, Pius XII expressed the need to give prominent American prelates a more visible presence in the administration of the universal Church, both in the College of Cardinals and in the Roman curia, to reflect the growing clout of American Catholics. He expressed as much to Harold Tittman, secretary to Myron Taylor, who recorded in July 1945 that the Pope “was emphatic that the Holy See must ‘look to the United States’ and that many non-Italians

³ See Patrick Carey, *Catholics in America*, 93.

⁴ Rome erected archdioceses in Denver (1941), Indianapolis (1944), Omaha (1945), Washington (1947), Seattle (1951) and Kansas City (1952). This was in addition to five new archdioceses erected in the late 1930’s.

should be brought to the Holy See in important positions.”⁵ The Pope’s words were backed with actions, as he quickly moved to integrate American prelates into positions of greater power. In July 1945, he named Cincinnati’s Father Valentine Schaefer the first American director of the Franciscan Order, passing over more senior European candidates. It was an appointment that allowed the Pope “to express his appreciation of the generous donations extended for relief purposes to the Holy See by American Catholics and the Catholic hierarchy in the United States,” as well as to make a “gesture of appreciation and good-will to the Government and the people of the United States.”⁶ Perhaps not coincidentally, the Franciscans also controlled the office of Custodian of the Holy Land, a centuries-old office which administered the order’s extensive property in the Holy Land, which included Jerusalem’s Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Bethlehem’s Basilica of the Nativity, and Nazareth’s Basilica of the Nativity.⁷

In his first postwar consistory, held in February 1946, Pius XII elected four new American cardinals. Joining Archbishop James Dougherty of Philadelphia was the mercurial Archbishop Francis Spellman of New York, and Archbishops John Glennon of St. Louis, Edward Mooney of Detroit, and Samuel Stritch of Chicago. The fivefold increase in American cardinals in a single consistory further underscored Rome’s postwar ‘turn’ towards the United States. The Papal Curia also named a number of American

⁵ National Archives and Record Administration (Hereafter NARA), Record Group 59 (Hereafter RG), Myron Taylor Papers (Hereafter MTP), Tittman to Secretary of State (Byrnes), Vatican, 5 July 1945.

⁶ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Tittman to Secretary of State (Byrnes), Vatican, 19 July 1945. Quoted in Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII* (Montreal, 2002): 95.

⁷ By the end of 1945, Schaefer appointed another American Franciscan, Father Edmund J. Murphy, as Commissary of the Holy Land. See Edmund J. Murphy to Paul F. Tanner, 22 January 1946, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

bishops to key posting in the Vatican's diplomatic service. Bishop Joseph Hurley of St. Augustine, Florida was named regent of the nunciature in Yugoslavia, Bishop Gerald O'Hara of Savannah, Georgia was named regent of the nunciature in Romania, and Bishop Aloysius Muench of Fargo, North Dakota would soon be named apostolic delegate to Germany.⁸ The promotion of American Catholics prompted Lord Halifax, British ambassador in Washington, to observe that it was "an indication that the Vatican recognized America's pre-eminent position as a world power," and that "the greater voice she will now have in Church affairs is regarded as only proper."⁹ It did not escape Halifax that "creeping bolshevism" drove the Vatican's renewed interest in the American Church, commenting that "the lengthening shadow of the Soviet Union is leading to an increase in the influence of its most inveterate antagonist."¹⁰

The seriousness with which the Vatican sought to place American prelates at the very height of curial power was made evident late in 1945, when Spellman was tabbed by Pius XII to succeed Luigi Maglione as Secretary of State. Spellman's suitability was emphasized on several fronts; to acknowledge a greater role for Americans in the curia, to facilitate the continuation of the Myron Taylor mission (in light of the war's end, and of Roosevelt's death), to tie the Vatican more closely to the strongest international foe of communism, and to ensure the cooperation of the United States in assisting with the re-

⁸ Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII*, 95. On the intriguing career of Joseph P. Hurley, see Charles R. Gallagher, *Vatican Secret Diplomacy: Joseph P. Hurley and Pope Pius XII* (New Haven, 2008).

⁹ Peter C. Kent, *The Lonely Cold War of Pope Pius XII* (Montreal, 2002): 157-158.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

settlement of Catholic refugees displaced by the war.¹¹ It also would have achieved the Pope's objective of naming a close friend and confidant to the position which, by 1945, Spellman certainly was. Spellman's candidacy was one of the worst kept secrets of the period, as news of the potential appointment appeared in the Italian and American press by early 1946. Giovanni Capobianco, a wartime wireless operator for the Vatican, broke the story to the Italian press in January in Rome's *Giornale del Mattino*, much to the chagrin of Vatican officials. "An American Secretary of State of a universal Church," he reported, "would be acceptable to the whole world in view of the high prestige which the United States has gained for itself, during the last few years especially. Then, too, Mgr. Spellman is an outstanding personality among American ecclesiastics, for aside from his highly charitable nature, he had throughout the war years pleaded for justice and universal brotherhood."¹² Spellman ultimately declined the nomination, a decision mutually agreed upon by the Archbishop and the Pope, who both felt that he would be more useful to the Vatican in the United States than in Rome. The seriousness of his candidacy, however, spoke to a new era of closer cooperation between the Holy See and the American Catholic Church.

Discussion of a formal diplomatic link between the Holy See and Washington was also raised in 1945. The Vatican, clearly sensing a need for closer ties to the United

¹¹ Gerald Fogarty, *The Vatican and the American Hierarchy From 1870 to 1965* (Washington, 1982): 310.

¹² NARA, RG 59, MTP, Gowen to Secretary of State, Vatican, 21 January 1946. See *Il Giornale del Mattino*, 18 January 1946, 'Il Vaticano e gli Stati Uniti'. Sources in the Vatican expressed their disapproval of Capobianco's piece to Franklin Gowen, an assistant to Taylor, stating that the journalist's view were "entirely his own, and have not been inspired in any way by the Holy See which, pending the Pope's decision- which is final- as to who may be appointed Cardinal Secretary of State, appropriately refrains from publicizing any particular candidate."

States, particularly as the spectre of Soviet communism loomed ever larger, expressed such a desire to Taylor in the spring of that year. In June, Taylor forwarded a lengthy memorandum to incoming Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, outlining the practical advantages of formal diplomatic recognition. He emphasized the Holy See's utility as a Cold War "listening post", given the range of ambassadors already stationed there. He also emphasized the significant number of non-Catholic states represented (including Great Britain, Germany and the Netherlands), and he contended that a Vatican ambassador would strengthen America's 'Good Neighbor Policy' with Latin America, creating a "favourable impression" among these largely Catholic states.¹³ Taylor also posited that a Vatican ambassador would be helpful in the "re-education" of occupied Germany and Austria, owing to the Church's historic standing in both of these states. In concluding, he emphasized that in the cause of peace, order and stability, the United States and the Holy See "shared a fundamental similarity of purpose in the postwar era", and advised that mutual objectives could be better achieved through formal recognition.¹⁴

President Harry Truman opted not to exchange ambassadors with the Vatican in 1945, choosing not to pique the ire of Protestant opponents in the infancy of his presidency. Truman did, however, choose to extend Taylor's mission as 'Personal Representative' to the Pope indefinitely, despite Roosevelt's assurance, in 1940, that the mission was "both special and temporary," highlighting the importance the new president

¹³ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 28, Taylor to Secretary of State, Vatican, 26 June 1945.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

placed on maintaining an informational channel with the Holy See.¹⁵ The very public exchange of letters between Pope and President in the summer of 1947, where each affirmed commitment to creating a world order based on peace, democracy, and freedom, underpinned by Christian morality, also seemed to buttress the American-Vatican relationship.¹⁶ Truman, furthermore, pressed Harold Tittman for a resident archbishop for Washington, giving him a high-ranking member of the hierarchy “right at hand, [whom] he could talk to whenever he wanted.”¹⁷ The Vatican erected the Archdiocese of Washington in November 1947, installing Patrick O’Boyle as its first Archbishop.

This informal strategic alliance of the American government, the Holy See and the American Church was bound by a mutuality of concerns and objectives in the postwar years. Chief among these was the containment of Soviet communism, an ideological worldview long since condemned and vilified by the Vatican and American Church. The American bishops’ Annual Statement for 1945, ‘Between War and Peace’, anticipated George Kennan’s ‘Long Telegram’ of 1947 and even Winston Churchill’s ‘Iron Curtain’ speech of 1946 on the need for Soviet ‘containment’.¹⁸ In it, the bishops emphasized the need for peace, democracy, justice and religious freedom as the underpinnings of a stable world order, and they expressed extreme reservations at the “soft hand” with which the

¹⁵ ‘Relations with the Vatican’, 12 February 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 11, File 1. Protestant groups had protested Taylor’s appointment from 1939 forward, arguing that an American envoy to the Pope violated notions of the separation of church and state. Opposition to a ‘Personal Representative’ to the Pope would remain persistent throughout the postwar years, forcing Truman to terminate the mission in 1951.

¹⁶ See NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 18, File 1, Harry S. Truman to Pope Pius XII, 6 August 1947; NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 18, File 1, Pope Pius XII to Harry S. Truman, 26 August 1947.

¹⁷ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 18, J. Graham Parsons to Walter C. Dowling, Vatican City, 5 December 1947.

¹⁸ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, ‘Text of Statement “Between War and Peace” Issued by Bishops of United States’, 18 November 1945.

United States and Britain treated the Soviet Union. Echoing Domenico Tardini's 1946 warning to Taylor, never to "trust lions disguised as lambs", the bishops urged a firmer hand in dealing with Stalin.¹⁹ A frank admission of the "clash of ideologies" which existed between East and West, the statement continued, and an insistence on a universal adherence to justice and democracy, were crucial to the shaping of a stable world order.²⁰ The statement also emphasized the need for national self-determination, particularly in Eastern Europe, and called upon American assistance for Italy and Germany, insisting on a constructive, rather than punitive, peace.

To the spring of 1947, the Vatican continued to harbour hopes, increasingly faint, that some sort of 'peaceful accommodation' could be found between the Soviet Union and the West, but its official 'non-alignment' was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain. Behind the facade of official impartiality, the pope remained deeply concerned about Soviet expansionism, both for the predicament this created for Roman Catholics in the Eastern bloc, and for the potential of communist party electoral successes in Western Europe and beyond. The pope's paranoia of bolshevism indeed verged on the phobic, lending credence to Peter Hebblethwaite's musing that Pius XII was "obsessed with the possibility of Cossacks in St. Peter's Square."²¹ This obsession led to a gradual yet steady alignment with the West and its leading power from the spring of 1947 forward, despite

¹⁹ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, Gowan to Secretary of State, Vatican, 26 September 1946. Tardini, though not Secretary of State until 1958, worked closely with Pius XII and Giovanni Montini (the future Pope Paul VI) in the Vatican Secretariat. In this exchange with Franklin Gowen, an assistant to Taylor, Tardini expressed the Vatican's scepticism on Stalin's commitments to postwar peace, quoting the ancient maxim to "beware Greeks, even when they bring you gifts."

²⁰ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, 'Text of Statement "Between War and Peace" Issued by the Archbishops and Bishops of United States', 18 November 1945.

²¹ See Hebblethwaite, 'Pope Pius XII: Chaplain of the Atlantic Alliance?', 67.

the cherished neutrality and official impartiality which had historically comprised the essence of papal diplomacy.

There were a number of signs that the Vatican was more openly aligning itself with Washington from this point forward. The repression of the Roman Catholic Church in the Soviet sphere caused escalating anxiety for the pope, and Tito's 1946 persecution of the Archbishop of Zagreb, Aloysius Stepinac, confirmed that the Church would not be spared Moscow's drive to consolidate its control. At the behest of the Vatican, which channelled numerous reports on the Church in the East to Washington, the NCWC generated a massive campaign in the American Catholic press to bring attention both to the trial of Stepinac and to the Soviet repression of the Christian churches generally. The NCWC campaign, which included outreach to a number of high-ranking congressmen, managed to attract the support of John W. McCormack of Massachusetts, the majority leader in the House of Representatives, who presented a thunderous denunciation of Stalinist aggression in a speech to the House on 27 July.²² Spellman, delighted with the speech, sent copies to the entire American episcopate. The Vatican, anxious to bolster the NCWC's publicity campaign, and anxious to elicit a firmer American hand in dealing with Stalinist aggression, prepared its own memorandum on the Yugoslav situation, which it forwarded to the State Department in August.

By the early winter of 1947, the American Catholic press was roundly lauding Washington's 'new' foreign policy objectives, as outlined in a speech by the President to

²² See Kent, 'The Lonely Cold War', 160-161.

Congress on 12 March.²³ The ‘Truman Doctrine’, in vowing military and financial support to Greece and Turkey, signalled a shift in American policy from detente to containment of Soviet expansion. The policy was extolled both at the Vatican and by leaders in the American Church, who had advocated a tougher line on Moscow for some time. Edmund J. Walsh, S.J., dean of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and recent consultant to the American government at the Nuremberg Trials, praised Truman’s resolute policy in a March speech to 1200 foreign service and diplomatic staff at Washington’s Statler Hotel. In comparing the Monroe Doctrine with the “equally historic Truman Doctrine”, Walsh exclaimed that “the non-colonization of the world by communist aggression is now declared to be a cardinal principle of American foreign policy. The speed with which the American principle of free democracy rushed in to occupy the political vacuum created by the withdrawal of British power from the Middle East is an index of awakened responsibility in high places. It was a question of immediate response to an impelling emergency or else progressive surrender to the calculated advance of world communism.”²⁴

Walsh’s statement was echoed by the Vatican itself, which offered its unqualified endorsement of the Marshall Plan in a series of articles in the *Osservatore Romano* and *Il Quotidiano* (the paper of the Church’s powerful lay organization, Catholic Action) in the summer of 1947. Though the Vatican had sought to maintain an impartial non-alignment

²³ See the *Boston Pilot*, ‘U.S. Seen Adopting New Foreign Policy’, 21 March 1947, 1,5; *Boston Pilot*, ‘Pres. Truman’s Message Lauded by Father Walsh’, 28 March 1947, 4.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 4. On Walsh’s considerable efforts to promote anticommunism both within Catholic circles and in wider American society, see Patrick McNamara’s *A Catholic Cold War: Edmund A. Walsh and the Politics of American Anticommunism* (New York, 2005).

through 1946 and 1947, despite private fears of Soviet encroachment, an endorsement of the Marshall Plan amounted to a de facto alignment with Washington. The exchange of letters between Truman and Pius XII in August 1947, circulated in the secular and religious press to maximum effect, appeared to seal the Washington-Vatican axis. The exchange coincided with Myron Taylor's return to Rome, following Truman's decision, despite a rising tide of Protestant opposition, to send his 'personal representative' back to the Vatican indefinitely. That Moscow considered the exchange of letters nothing short of a working alliance between the Vatican and the United States was suggested to Taylor's office by Don Manuel Sotomayor Luna, the Ecuadorian ambassador to the Holy See. Commenting that the Soviets considered the United States too strong for a "frontal attack", he suggested that Stalin would "weaken it by two major flank attacks", namely Latin America and the Roman Catholic Church.²⁵ "The communists consider the exchange of letters between the President and the Pope", he offered, "as tantamount to an alliance and as a source of moral strength to the United States. Accordingly, if it can defeat and weaken the Holy See, they will also be weakening the United States." In concluding, the ambassador recalled a recent meeting with the pope, where he informed Pius that in Moscow, he was now referred to as "that American."²⁶ Sotomayor's inference was confirmed during a September 1948 meeting between Montini and James Dunn, the American ambassador to Italy. Montini informed his guest that he saw little hope of Vatican relations with any Soviet-controlled government, and that Moscow was "using the Orthodox Church as a political instrument to undermine the Vatican, whose

²⁵ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 19, 'Memorandum of Conversation Between Graham Parsons and Don Manuel Sotomayor Luna', 14 January 1948.

²⁶ *ibid.*

favourable attitude toward the Marshall Plan...was particularly resented by Stalin.”²⁷ In closing, however, he pledged the Vatican’s unwavering support of the Marshall Plan, repeating three times to Dunn that it “must succeed for the good of mankind.”²⁸

Open cooperation between Washington, the Vatican and the American Church reached an apogee during the 1948 Italian elections, which pitted a left-wing bloc of communists and socialists, led by the Italian Communist Party (PCI), against a centre-right bloc led by Alcide DeGasperi’s Christian Democrats (DC). The Vatican, through the organs of Catholic Action, organized a capillary-like network of diocesan and parish organizations intended to steer Italian Catholics away from the PCI, and into the voting booth on election day.²⁹ The American government, through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), channelled money, supplies and expertise to the Holy See and the DC. On a public level, the Truman administration, until the eve of the election, subtly reminded Italians that American aid, including Marshall Plan dollars, would not necessarily continue flowing to a ‘red’ Italy. The American Catholic Church, at the suggestion of Luigi Gedda, head of Catholic Action, initiated a letter-writing campaign which saw American-Italians writing relatives in Italy to warn them of the consequences of a PCI victory. Coordinated by the NCWC, through the office of Cicognani, the apostolic delegate, the campaign focused on dioceses and archdioceses with the highest

²⁷ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, ‘Memorandum of Conversation’, 17 September 1948. Montini assured Dunn strenuously that the Vatican considered the Marshall Plan as “the most important contribution to the cause of peace, economic and moral rehabilitation of Europe and indirectly the whole world.”

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ On the seminal 1948 Italian election, see Robert A. Ventresca, *From Fascism to Democracy: Culture and Politics in the Italian Election of 1948* (Toronto, 2004).

concentrations of Italian-American faithful.³⁰ By mid-March 1948, the United States Post Office reported that mail to Italy had already doubled.³¹ American and Vatican efforts appeared to have succeeded: DeGasperi's coalition achieved a comfortable victory in the 18 April election. The Vatican did not hesitate to thank the American Church for its services rendered. Through Cicognani, it relayed to the NCWC the "deep gratitude" of the Secretary of State "for the very active and efficient part taken by the NCWC in this campaign and its promotion."³²

American designs for the postwar world dovetailed quite closely with the American bishops' Statement of 1945. The episcopacy's call for "containment" became American policy by 1947, as a firmer hand in dealing with Moscow became entrenched. The Marshall Plan fulfilled the objective of foisting a judicious and measured peace on Germany, designed to prevent its absorption into the Soviet sphere. In Italy, the informal, yet highly effective, alliance of Washington, the American Church and the Vatican helped deliver victory to Alcide DeGasperi's Christian Democrats in the 1948 Italian elections, narrowly denying power to the communist-led Popular Democratic Front. If Pius XII looked to Washington to shape a postwar order based the principles of democracy, peace, justice and religious freedom, the United States could equally, by late 1945, view the Vatican and American Catholics as committed ideological partners in such a task.

³⁰ For a contemporary analysis of the letter-writing campaign, see C. Edda Martinez and Edward A. Suchman, 'Letters From America and the 1948 Elections in Italy', *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 14, 1 (Spring 1950): 111-125.

³¹ See the *New York Times*, 'Italians Warned of 'Red' Slavery', 23 March 1948, 2.

³² Quoted in Kent, *The Lonely Cold War*, 198.

Non Possumus: A New Roman Catholic Crusade for the Holy Land

Though a clutch of mutual, and vital, common concerns did draw Washington and the Vatican closer together in the years after 1945, Roman Catholic attitudes towards Zionism and the Holy Land grew increasingly at odds with positions beginning to prevail in the Senate and State Department, where support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine was growing. Favourable opinion on Zionism was also growing among the American public. By the summer of 1945, newsreel footage of Auschwitz, Buchenwald and other Nazi death camps had vividly brought the horrors of the Holocaust to bear on the American conscience, creating a groundswell of support for Zionism that had been building through the war years. It was a development that was about to put American Catholic opposition to Zionism in much sharper relief.

The Vatican was certainly cognizant of the humanitarian crisis that the Holocaust had created for surviving European Jews, yet this did not alter its longstanding opposition to Zionism, as outlined in the 1922 *aide memoire* issued by Cardinal Pietro Gasparri to the League of Nations.³³ A series of private audiences with Pius XII in 1945 confirmed this. In a papal audience in April of that year, Moshe Sharett, future Prime Minister of Israel and then head of the pre-state Jewish Agency government, assured the Pope that there was “no clash between [Zionist] aspirations in Palestine and the high interests of Christianity and the Catholic Church.”³⁴ The Pope acknowledged his guest’s concerns, but continued to express the opinion on the unfeasibility of Zionism. “There are Arabs in

³³ See *Aide Mémoire*, Pietro Cardinal Gasparri, 4 June 1922, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

³⁴ Pinchas Lapide, *Three Popes and the Jews* (New York, 1967): 277.

Palestine...They are the majority”, Pius XII offered in response. Though Sharett tried to emphasize the specific importance of Palestine to the Jewish diaspora, “the only place we have in the whole world”, he remained unconvinced that the Roman Church would be supportive moving forward.³⁵ By his own later admission, his attempt to elicit some kind of Vatican sympathy for the program of postwar Zionism, based on a rational explanation of the political and humanitarian reality, and in the immediate wake of the Holocaust, “went nowhere”.³⁶

In September, Pius XII received Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, a member of the Zionist Emergency Committee, and who would be assigned in 1946 by President Truman as an official advisor to the United States Army in Europe on the resettlement of nearly 200,000 European Jews. During the audience, held at Castel Gandolfo, Bernstein thanked the Pope for his assistance to European Jewry during the war, and for his continuing assistance to Jewish refugees in postwar Italy.³⁷ The rabbi was impressed by the Pope’s genuine anguish at the fate of European Jews, which he repeatedly described as “dreadful”. On the question of Jewish resettlement, however, Pius XII continued to disregard the option of a Jewish Palestine, informing his guest that Jewish immigration to the United States or to South America would be a suitable solution to the postwar refugee crisis. Bernstein then apprised the Pope of the resistance to Jewish immigration in the United States and elsewhere, coupled with a desire among many displaced European

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Paul Charles Merkley, *Christian Attitudes Towards the State of Israel* (Montreal, 2001): 138.

³⁷ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 28, ‘Private Audience With Pope Pius XII at Castel Gandolfo, 11 September 1945.

Jews to settle in Palestine. “Yes, I recognize that as their desire”, the Pope admitted to Bernstein, but he suggested that “the United States was best equipped to absorb them”.³⁸ Bernstein left the meeting with Pius guardedly optimistic, noting that the Pope ended the audience with “another handshake, not firm but with enough pressure to suggest a positive clasp.”

That the American Catholic hierarchy was to maintain a line on Palestine parallel to that of the Vatican was emphasized in December 1945, when prominent archbishops in the American Church, including Spellman, Stritch, Mooney and Glennon, were again forwarded copies of the Vatican’s 1922 *aide memoire*, as well as copies of Cardinal Gasparri’s 1922 note to the British Minister to the Holy See, both of which outlined Rome’s opposition to a Jewish state in Palestine on political, theological and historical grounds.³⁹ Both statements, now thirty years old, and composed long before the rise of the Nazis and the eventual tragedy of the Holocaust, were still to be regarded as the definitive positions of the Roman Catholic Church on the question of Palestine. That the statements were re-issued at the end of 1945, after having been distributed to the entire American episcopate through the NCWC in June 1944, was evidence that the cessation of hostilities in Europe, and a clearer appraisal of the tragedy of European Jewry, had not altered the Vatican’s fundamental position on the future of Palestine.⁴⁰

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ See *Aide Mémoire*, Pietro Cardinal Gasparri, 4 June 1922, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

⁴⁰ On the distribution of the *aide mémoire* through the NCWC in June 1944, see Amleto Cicognani to Michael Ready, 19 May 1944, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 14.

Generally speaking, however, Catholic resistance to Zionism was not a policy aired too publically from the Holy See in the period immediately following the war. This was chiefly because Vatican priorities in the immediate postwar years centred squarely on “containment” of Soviet communism, which clearly posed the most severe threats to the interests of the Church in this period. As American public support for Zionism continued to grow in 1946 and 1947 (with a slim majority of Americans coming to support the idea), and as the American government increasingly pledged its support, an explicit Vatican opposition became increasingly difficult.⁴¹ President Truman’s growing personal commitment to the Zionist idea made an oppositional stance more difficult still. In the interests of maintaining sound relations with Washington, and particularly not to jeopardize the Taylor mission, the Vatican remained publically silent on the question of Zionism, though resistance to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine remained the formal policy of the Church both in Rome and the United States.

Given the convergence of interests between the American Church and Washington in the postwar years, leading figures in the American hierarchy were similarly reticent to trumpet an opposition to Zionism too loudly, lest it hamper the ability of the Church to work with the American government on other mutual objectives. Seeking American aid for war-ravaged Italy was one such objective, in accordance with the bishop’s postwar commitments to building international democracy, justice and religious freedom. In the weeks before he was raised to the College of Cardinals by Pius XII, in April 1946, Chicago’s archbishop Stritch emphasized the need for American aid

⁴¹ For an analysis of American public opinion on the Arab-Israeli struggle in these years, see Eytan Gilboa, *American Public Opinion Toward Israel and the Arab-Israeli Conflict* (Toronto, 1982): 15-27.

to Italy during an hour-long meeting with President Truman at the White House.⁴² Stritch emphasized the need for the United States to “make good” on its promises “in support of the reconstruction of Italy on the basis of the core principles of Western civilization,” warning that the devastation wrought by war had made communism a viable alternative for many Italians. Though Stritch was not sure that the President understood the gravity of the communist threat in Italy, he was confident that he shared the postwar ambitions of both the Vatican and American Catholics.⁴³ As increasingly important intermediaries between Rome and Washington, however, American Catholic leaders shared the Vatican’s apprehensions on taking visibly oppositional positions with the American government, including the divergence of opinion on Zionism. The American bishops were well aware that a definitive public stand against Zionism could jeopardize other areas of cooperation with Washington, precisely at the moment when relations with the Truman administration appeared progressively fruitful. The bishops preferred to remain circumspect, withholding public statements as they pursued other areas of cooperation.

The American Catholic press, however, expressed opinion more freely than the bishops could. While the bishops exercised strategic restraint on the question, anti-Zionist musings continued to be expressed liberally through the diocesan and wider American Catholic press, in line with Cardinal Maglione’s call in August 1943 that the Catholic press trumpet the Vatican’s line on Palestine. By 1945, such delineation in Catholic journals became increasingly important in shaping public opinion on the

⁴² ‘Memorandum- Conversation with President Truman- White House- Washington, D.C.’ 3 April 1946, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 14, File 42.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

Palestine question, particularly as sympathy for a Jewish home in Palestine grew in the wake of the war. As outlined in the previous chapter, a series of articles in the diocesan press in the fall and winter of 1945 continued to heap criticism on Zionism. Anthony Bruya, an American Franciscan and the Jerusalem correspondent for the NCWC News Service, produced a series of such articles, eventually carried by the *Brooklyn Tablet*, the *Boston Pilot*, the *New World* (Chicago), *Catholic Mind*, and other large circulation diocesan papers.⁴⁴ Bruya, closely echoing the Vatican, questioned the “absorptive capacity” of Palestine to accommodate Europe’s displaced Jews. He criticized Jews who looked to the territory as a “new *lebensraum* for commercial enterprise and expansion”, crassly linking Zionism to the Nazi drive for empire. As the Pope had expressed privately, Bruya touted alternatives for Jews seeking refuge and settlement, suggesting North and South America as ideal points of emigration. He also juxtaposed the safeguarding of Christian holy sites in Palestine with Zionist dreams of a Jewish state, arguing that the latter was wholly incompatible with the former, a position more firmly expressed in the Catholic press from 1945 forward. “For thousands of years Palestine has been the Holy Land”, Bruya observed, “and it must continue to be such in the years which follow the devastation of this global war. In defence of its sacred character and its Holy Places the flower of European manhood once purpled with Crusader blood many a Palestine battlefield. It would be unthinkable that now, from the unspeakable wreckage of this war, which in the Providence of God passed by this Holy Land, should come a new

⁴⁴ See, for example, ‘Failure to Safeguard Christian Rights Will Prolong Solution of the Palestine Question’, 4 April 1945, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44. Bruya was also attached to the Washington-based Commissariat of the Holy Land, and was the editor of the association’s quarterly review, *The Crusader’s Almanac*.

desecration of the home land of Jesus Christ.”⁴⁵ The article reflected the increasingly dire, crusade-inspired rhetoric that was coming to characterize American Catholic reportage on Palestine. In concluding, Bruya suggested an international trusteeship for the territory, under the auspices of the recently formed United Nations (UN), as the only solution that could reliably protect Roman Catholic interests in the Holy Land. Once again, he floated an idea that the Vatican, and American Catholic leaders, had only suggested in private conversations.

Bruya’s sentiments were echoed further in the Catholic press by Mgr. Michael Assemani, the representative of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem to the United States, and also an NCWC correspondent in Palestine. In a series of articles in the fall of 1945, Assemani defended Christianity’s ancient claims to the territory, arguing that any solution that handed political control of the territory to “either Jews or Mohammedans” would represent a violation of Christianity’s stake to the territory. He similarly suggested a UN stewardship of the territory, and urged allied governments to “put a stop to the religious and racial bickering” between Jew and Arab in the territory.⁴⁶

As Assemani’s condemnations of Zionist designs for Palestine grew progressively more acerbic in the spring of 1946, the NCWC Press Department became increasingly reticent to proclaim such a conspicuously anti-Zionist editorial line. This was particularly so in light of the 1946 Anglo-American Report on Palestine, which suggested that a UN

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ See the *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Solution of Palestine is Allied Problem: Religious Attachment at Root of Arab-Jewish Conflict’, 1 December 1945; *Michigan Catholic*, ‘Christian Rights in Holy Land Ignored in Arab-Jewish Dispute’, 12 December 1945.

commission be established to administer the territory, much to the consternation of Zionist leaders in the United States and Europe. As it appeared that Catholic designs for the territory were being fulfilled by the recommendations of the report, the NCWC adopted a guardedly neutral line on Zionism, preferring not to inflame public opinion, particularly as sympathy for Zionism continued to rise. The NCWC was also concerned with cultivating its closer ties to Washington, an objective that could be complicated by an effervescent anti-Zionism among American Catholics.

Much like the Vatican's official organ, the *Osservatore Romano*, diocesan papers, under the auspices of the NCWC, adopted an increasingly ambivalent line on Zionism through the spring and summer of 1946, confident that a settlement on the territory amenable to the Vatican and the American Church, namely a UN administration of the territory, was unfolding. The NCWC's desire for a more ambivalent stance was revealed in May 1946 when Frank Hall, director of the NCWC's Press Department, informed General Secretary Mgr. Howard Carroll that Assemani's articles, increasingly critical of Zionism, risked creating an anti-Catholic backlash against the Church in the United States, hampering its ability to pursue common objectives with the American government (where sympathy with Zionism continued to rise).⁴⁷ Hall preferred a neutral stance, reminding Carroll that neither the Vatican nor the American hierarchy had issued a definitive and public statement "expressing positive agreement or disagreement with the Zionists hopes for a Jewish homeland." In touting the value of neutrality on the issue, he continued that

⁴⁷ Frank Hall to Howard Carroll, 8 May 1946, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

...we seem at present on the fence, in the sense that no one can say we took a position for or against (I realize what some persons think on the subject, but they haven't gone on record). Now, Father Assemani could be described as having an official position of great importance with regard to Palestine. We could be described as the news agency of the American hierarchy. If we sent out [his] articles, it could be described as giving the Catholic position on the Zionist's hopes for a Jewish homeland. It would be a position in the opposition.⁴⁸

Carroll's handwritten response stated that Assemani's articles "should be held in abeyance for the present."

A *Commonweal* editorial on the Palestine question from May 1946 epitomized the cautious position adopted by the American Catholic press in the early postwar period.

We have never been able to make up our minds on the subject of Jewish immigration into Palestine. We fully recognize the desperate need of Europe's remaining Jews for a homeland in which they can be reasonably confident of living unmolested... But we are likewise equally suspicious of Zionist nationalism and we cannot withhold our sympathy from the natives of Palestine who, however short-sightedly, seem to prefer to keep their country for their own use. Americans, of all people, can with the least grace criticize others for attempts to restrict immigration. And hence we cannot make up our minds, especially since we believe that the first duty of our own country is itself to provide a haven of refuge for the harborless.⁴⁹

The editorial closely mirrored the Vatican's position on the issue: that a refuge for displaced Jews had to be found, but that the Zionist program was problematic on a number of fronts, and that Jewish emigration, particularly to the United States, represented a more viable solution.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Commonweal*, 'Palestine', 17 May 1946, 109.

The restraint exhibited by the NCWC on the Palestine question in the spring and summer of 1946 was not as evident in other organs of the American Catholic press. The national Jesuit weekly *America*, for example, continued to openly criticize Zionist demands, characterizing them as belligerent and wholly incompatible with Christian and Muslim rights in the territory. Publishing outside the auspices of the NCWC, *America* largely abandoned its wartime editorial line which alternated between a show of Catholic solidarity with persecuted Jews and a stern scepticism for Zionism, to focus more singularly on criticisms of the latter. The journal admitted that a viable solution had to be found for Europe's displaced Jews, but it clearly expressed its reservations with Zionism as that solution. As early as December 1945, *America* accused Zionist organizations of exploiting the suffering of Jews as an expedient to the erecting of a sovereign Jewish state.⁵⁰ *America* suggested that unity among Jews was based on religion rather than nationality, and that Zionism sought to create a question of national sovereignty out of what was properly a humanitarian crisis. The journal seconded Hans Morgenthau's November 1945 assertion that Palestine be placed "under the auspices of the UN," and it claimed to stand with Jews "embarrassed at aggressive Zionism."⁵¹

Throughout 1946, *America* expressed consternation at Zionist impatience with the Anglo-American Report on Palestine (which represented a repudiation of the Zionist program), and criticized the increasingly violent tactics adopted by Jewish nationalists in

⁵⁰ *America*, 'Palestine', 1 December 1945, 2.

⁵¹ See, for example, *America*, 'Palestine Crisis: Arabs Must be Considered', 29 June 1946, 262; 'Zionists and Palestine', 6 July 1946, 290; 'Refugees and Zionism', 13 July 1946, 319; 'The Palestine Mandate', 20 July 1946, 111; 'Tragedy in Palestine', 3 August 1946, 402.

Palestine.⁵² It regarded the Report as the most pragmatic solution to what was becoming an intractable political situation. “A fairer compromise”, the journal described it, “in view of the complications that thirty years have added to the original 1917 arrangement, could scarcely have been forthcoming.”⁵³ It charged that Zionist belligerence, which was spilling into violence, hampered the “Jewish cause” more severely than even Arab intransigence, and urged that British diplomacy, which favoured an international mandate for the territory, be given a chance to succeed. *America* repeatedly criticized the “narrow nationalism” of the Zionists, charging that it “[appeared] that the Zionist nationalists no longer fight the battle to secure a refuge for persecuted brethren, but rather to further national ambitions.”⁵⁴ In a later editorial, the journal accused Zionist leaders of exploiting the refugee crisis to fuel the “religio-nationalist mystique” of Zionism, all to push forward “an obscure claim for a Jewish ‘nationality’ and a small strip of land where it may be expressed.” *America* also invoked the communist bogey with regularity, suggesting in a number of editorials that the success of the Zionist program in Palestine would only give a stronger toehold to the Soviets in the region, where Arab dispossession would only worsen with the establishment of a Jewish state.⁵⁵

That the Holy See endorsed the editorial line of *America*, including its critical stance on the Zionist program, was made clear in May of 1946, when Pius XII issued a

⁵² *America*, ‘Zionists and Palestine’, 6 July 1946, 290.

⁵³ *America*, ‘The Lesson of Palestine’, 18 May 1946, 130-132.

⁵⁴ *America*, ‘Refugees and Zionism’, 13 July 1946, 319.

⁵⁵ See, for example, *America*, ‘Palestine Crisis: Arabs Must be Considered’, 29 June 1946, 290; *America*, ‘Soviet Anti-Semitism?’, 9 March 1946, 595. The latter editorial warned that “while the British are blamed by the Zionists for exploiting Arab nationalism, Russia is showing quite as much interest in the six Arab states as Great Britain.”

letter to John LaFarge S. J., the noted liberal Catholic leader who had edited the journal since 1944.⁵⁶ The letter, printed in the pages of *America* in July, praised LaFarge and his editorial staff for principled and practical “Catholic” solutions to the myriad of problems that faced the postwar world. The pope lauded *America* for calling “the attention of statesmen and leaders in the social and economic field to the cankers that weaken the body politic in its national and international life,” and for critiquing “exaggerated nationalisms that would close [their] eyes to the unity of the human family.”⁵⁷ Pius XII further praised LaFarge for the “spirit of obedience constantly guiding the policy of [the] review in analyzing in a careful and scholarly manner the complex issues of the day, and pointing to the solution offered for them by the principles of Christian philosophy.” The letter represented an implicit Vatican endorsement of *America’s* views on the Palestine question, evidence that Rome stood behind the various criticisms of Zionism expressed in the American Catholic press.

Events in Palestine itself would only harden Catholic opinion, as tensions there continued to intensify through 1946. In the immediate aftermath of the war, Zionists were confident that Britain would deliver on the promises of the Balfour Declaration and acquiesce to their demands for a Jewish state. The victory of Clement Atlee’s Labour Party in the July 1945 British election only heightened Zionist hopes, given Labour’s previous endorsements for a Jewish National Home in Palestine. This optimism quickly soured, however, when it became evident that Atlee’s Foreign Minister, Ernest Bevin, had no intentions of facilitating Zionist designs in Palestine. Bevin extended Britain’s

⁵⁶ See *America*, ‘Pope Pius XII to John LaFarge’, 27 July 1946, 4.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

cautious course on Palestine, imposing renewed immigration quotas and promising only to launch another inquiry into the situation. This inquiry, which became the 1946 Anglo-American Report, represented a check on the momentum that mainstream Zionist organizations appeared to have gained during the war, and contributed to decaying relations between Jewish Palestinians and British occupying forces in the territory.

Maintaining stability in the territory from early 1946 forward proved a difficult task for Britain, which stationed nearly 80,000 soldiers there to maintain order. Underground Zionist organizations such as the *Irgun* and the *Haganah*, increasingly frustrated with Britain's stonewalling of their ambitions, waged an intermittent campaign of sabotage and bombings through the spring and summer. This resistance began with the sinking of two British police boats in Haifa in October 1944, and continued with attacks on other symbols of British control in the territory, including railroads, police stations and military bases. By July, British authorities had arrested nearly three thousand Jews on suspicions of sabotage and terrorism. Though the recognized Jewish Agency government officially criticized the campaign of such clandestine groups, it became clear that Britain's 'Palestine policy' was an affront to mainstream Zionist organizations as well. *Irgun* and *Haganah* attacks increased in frequency and severity from July forward. Jerusalem's King David Hotel, which served as the Britain's administrative headquarters in Palestine, was bombed on 22 July, followed by the bombing of the British embassy in Rome in October, both incidences suspected work of the Zionist underground.

The intensifying of the terror campaign by the *Irgun* and other groups drew a predictable response from *America*, which again linked Zionism to a crude "crypto-nationalism" that was little interested in seeking a genuine solution to the Jewish refugee

crisis.⁵⁸ The violence of 1946, the journal suggested, “encourages the suspicion that certain elements of the Zionists are no more responsible or politically mature, despite superior material culture, than some Arab extremists who would resort to the same means if they got the chance and hope of success. Zionism is now in the difficult position of having to prove the possibility of peaceful government in Palestine.”⁵⁹ *America*’s position closely reflected that of the Vatican, which viewed both Jewish and Arab nationalism with deep suspicion, consistently preferring an international mandate over the territory than the victory of either of these national movements.⁶⁰

The escalation of violence in Palestine from the summer of 1946 forward, in fact, marked the beginning of a more widespread condemnation of Zionism and its methods across a wider spectrum of the American diocesan press. The *Commonweal*, which had previously offered only a convoluted and cautious opinion on Zionism in the period immediately following the war (in line with the Vatican’s own circumspection), became more hostile from this point forward. It linked the July bombing of the King David Hotel not to the underground groups that had planned and undertaken it, but “to Zionism itself...that must bear responsibility for an act that threatens all it ever aimed to create.”⁶¹ Like *America*, the *Commonweal* characterized the aims of Zionists as distinct and separate from those of a majority of world Jewry who, in the opinion of these Catholic journals, only sought to live in peace and security in the various states that would accept

⁵⁸ *America*, ‘Tragedy in Palestine’, 3 August 1946, 402.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ On Vatican apprehensions towards Arab nationalism in Palestine, see Andrej Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 89-92.

⁶¹ *Commonweal*, ‘The Bomb in Jerusalem’, 2 August 1946, 372.

them as immigrants. “Zionists”, it commented further, “never in contemporary times a majority of the Jews, sought to use intimidation and violence to achieve an end not widely supported by their global co-religionists.” It further opined that it “could not conceal [its] anger and distress now that a long and mistaken campaign has brought one more bitter nationalism into a world that has too many of them.”⁶² Denunciations on similar grounds could be found in a variety of American Catholic journals and papers, including the *Boston Pilot*, *Sign*, *Catholic Mind*, *Catholic Worker*, the *Brooklyn Tablet* and others, evidence that the circumscribed and cautious anti-Zionism of 1945-1946 was giving way to a more uniform chorus denouncing the idea of Jewish statehood in Palestine.⁶³

The notion that Roman Catholic interests in the territory were taking a back seat to the Arab-Israeli struggle was also emphasized from 1947 onward. Once again Anthony Bruya, the NCWC’s Jerusalem correspondent, provided the reportage. He decried the “third rate status” of Christian claims, and frequently quoted the Anglo-American Report’s admission that “the great interest of the Christian world in Palestine has been completely overlooked, glossed over, or brushed aside.”⁶⁴ By the summer of 1947, Bruya

⁶² *Ibid.* In the same issue, the *Commonweal* ran an article by J.L. Teller (a ‘Zionist observer’), which outlined the increasingly insidious campaign waged by Palestinian Zionists in their quest for a Jewish state. It dismissed parallels made in the American mainstream press that equated the Zionist struggle to that of 18th century American revolutionaries, instead branding the Irgun and the Haganah as criminal terrorist organizations. In chiding Zionist arrogance, it charged that “the Jews are building Palestine as though it already were a Jewish state.” See *Commonweal*, ‘The Tools of Jewish Resistance’, 2 August 1946, 375-377.

⁶³ See, for example, *Sign*, 25 March 1946, 4; *Catholic Mind*, ‘Conflicts in Palestine’, October 1946, 607-615; *Commonweal*, ‘Palestine and Murder’, 13 December 1946, 222; *America*, ‘Palestine Turmoil: Zionist Impatience’, 15 March 1947, 647-648; *Catholic World*, ‘Palestine: A Solution’, March 1947, 489-490.

⁶⁴ *Boston Pilot*, ‘Palestine Peace Hinges on Minority Rights’, 4 July 1947, 5.

assured his readers, little had changed. In June, Bruya fanned the flames of a “new crusade” for Palestine, employing a motif which was appearing with increased frequency. In commenting on the dangers of a solution which ignored the Christian stake, he quoted an un-named former British High Commissioner to Palestine, who “bluntly expressed” to Bruya that “the disregard of Christian sentiment and Christian rights in any settlement of the Holy Land problem would arouse a new crusading spirit like that of ages past.”⁶⁵ In July, Bruya expressed the apprehension, shared by the Vatican and the American hierarchy, of either Arab or Jewish control over the whole territory. “The process of industrialization and modernization”, he observed, “rapidly carried out by immigrant Jews in many parts of Palestine is taken as an ill omen even by progressive Church leaders,” while “an Arab Palestinian state with a Moslem majority, it is feared, will clamp down discrimination against the Christians, especially Western missions, forbidding their missionary work and forcing them to leave the country as undesirables.”⁶⁶ Bruya’s columns reflected the tone of the diocesan press for much of 1947, which lent tentative support to the UN’s search for a solution to the conundrum, while ‘holding to account’ the world body on its promises to protect the Christian stake in the territory. Taken collectively, it was an editorial line which reflected the Vatican’s own position on Palestine by the summer of 1947.

Similar patterns were found in other organs of the American Catholic press. The thinly-veiled scepticism of UN efforts, so prominent in the diocesan press, was echoed in the Jesuit weekly *America*, though this journal barely restrained its longstanding disdain

⁶⁵ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Sees Christian Rights Already Ignored in the Holy Land’, 28 June 1947, 11.

⁶⁶ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘UN Group Studies Plea on Christians in Palestine’, 26 July 1947, 1.

for political Zionism. Though editorship of the journal had passed in 1944 to John LaFarge, S.J., a liberal figure known for his tireless advocacy for racial equality and justice in the United States, its editorial line on Zionism remained intact, further evidence of an analogous and unchanging Roman Catholic position on the Holy Land. Throughout 1947, *America* characterized the demands of Zionists as opportune, cynical, perilous and ill-advised. The stability of the whole region, let alone the interests of Roman Catholics, the journal implored, was put at risk by “impatient Zionism” and its drive to create a Jewish state.⁶⁷ To this end, *America* consistently emphasized the fact that Zionism enjoyed no universal support among Western Jewry, asserting in a May editorial that “In no nation are the Jews found to be united on the political objectives of Zionism, however universal the chorus of admiration for their prodigious social and economic achievements.”⁶⁸ In October, the journal presented the views of Elmer Berger, Director of the anti-Zionist American Council for Judaism, which insisted that global Jewry, as a religious and not a national group, should focus its efforts on securing legal safeguards and religious freedoms and the inalienable rights of the individual, but not statehood.⁶⁹ *America* conceded, however, that anti-Zionist Jewish groups “will scarcely prevail, inasmuch as their insistence on religious unity, as against unified nationality, separates

⁶⁷ *America*, ‘Zionist Impatience,’ 15 March 1947, 648. In this editorial, *America* urged the “political Zionists” to “reassess their course”, given that the Arabs were strengthening their position at the UN, and political turmoil in the Holy Land was “progressively annoying” Britain, which needed to focus its energies elsewhere. It concluded that “even the UN will probably be unable to meet the insistent demands not only for a Jewish homeland but also for a state. Zionism is experiencing a crisis. The rest of the world can only hope that it does not endanger world peace.”

⁶⁸ *America*, ‘UN and a Holy Land’, 3 May 1947, 120.

⁶⁹ *America*, ‘Judaism and Palestine’, 18 October 1947, 84.

them too sharply from the Zionist tendency, which has been a half a century in growing.”⁷⁰

America placed similarly little faith in Arab control of the territory. It opined that the Arab League “had put a bold face on their plea for self-government and independence, with only vague and meagre promises that their first ‘democratic experiment’ would work in a land of such cynically divided loyalties.”⁷¹ It maintained that while the Arabs presented a consistent claim for nationalism, “Arab intransigence”, and “the strong Arab tendency to particularism, which could hardly be called nationalism” would bedevil any successful Arab administration of the territory. The journal initially its support behind an international trusteeship for Palestine, observing that “to practically every [UN] member-nation Palestine- all of it, not merely this or that enclave- is Holy Land first, and only by regrettable concomitance a political problem at all.”⁷² As the situation in Palestine continued to worsen, the American Catholic press placed Christian interests in the territory front and centre, girding Catholic opinion for the coming struggle for the future of the territory at the UN.

The UN Partition Plan and the Birth of the ‘*Corpus Separatum*’, 1947-1948

Events in Palestine after the bombing of the King David Hotel made it evident that Britain’s mandatory control over the territory was becoming increasingly fragile. The *Irgun*, and other underground groups, were becoming progressively emboldened in their

⁷⁰ *America*, ‘Palestine and Partition’, 25 October 1947, 90.

⁷¹ *America*, ‘UN and a Holy Land’, 3 May 1947, 120. Quoted from *Catholic Mind*, ‘Religion the Keys to Conflict in Palestine’, October 1946, 607-615.

⁷² *Ibid*, 120.

successes against British targets in the Holy Land, and stepped up their campaign in the fall and winter of 1946 and the spring of 1947. The *Irgun's* tactic of capturing and executing British soldiers and administrators for each of their own casualties (often by hanging) added a sinister odium to the struggle. As international sympathy for Zionism continued to gain traction, particularly in the United States, and as the struggle against underground Zionist groups continued to intensify, necessitating an occupying force of nearly 100,000 personnel, the British Foreign Office began to seriously question its commitment to the mandate.

As domestic and international pressure mounted, Britain finally decided in February 1947 to turn the question of Palestine over to the United Nations, stipulating only that any proposed solution would have to be acceptable to both Arabs and Jews in the territory.⁷³ The General Assembly promptly established the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP), a body created to investigate the conflict in the Holy Land, and to propose a viable solution.⁷⁴ Throughout 1947, UNSCOP delegates examined a variety of political solutions for Palestine, including a Jewish state with guaranteed rights for Arab minorities, an Arab state with guaranteed rights for Jewish minorities, UN trusteeship for the territory, and a partitioned state. By the fall, the committee had prepared a majority report, which favoured a partitioned state with UN trusteeship for the

⁷³ Some historians contend that Britain's condition of a resolution that would satisfy both Arabs and Jews was, by design, a 'poison pill' designed to render impossible the UN's intervention. Once control would be ceded back to Britain, it would be free to pursue its imperial interests in the territory. See, for example, Richie Ovendale, *Britain, the United States and the End of the Palestine Mandate, 1942-1948* (Royal Historical Society, 1989).

⁷⁴ The UNSCOP was comprised of representatives from 11 countries: Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, the Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

‘Old City’ of Jerusalem, and a minority report which recommended a federated Palestinian state to be administered by the Arabs, with constitutional protections for the Jewish minority. The majority report prevailed, and on 29 November 1947, the UN adopted a resolution to create both a Jewish and an Arab state in the territory, while maintaining Jerusalem as an “international zone” under the auspices of the UN.

News of the UN resolution on Palestine elicited little official reaction from either the Vatican or the leading figures of the American Church. The Holy See remained opposed to the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, but it continued, on an official level, to cloister this policy, cognizant of the broad international support for the partition plan, and desirous to maintain its growing strategic and ideological alliance with the United States (which had firmly supported the UN plan). Though the Vatican remained opposed in principle to a Jewish Palestine, it was equally wary of an Arab state in the territory, a prospect that it had long since regarded, like Zionism, as a threat to Roman Catholic interests in the Holy Land. The views of the Vatican on Arab nationalism were shared by Myron Taylor, who expressed his apprehensions in a memo to Cordell Hull during the closing months of the Second World War:

I have repeatedly expressed the opinion that no encouragement should be given to the establishment, after the war, of a pan-Arab confederation. I have serious doubts as to the opportuneness of encouraging a similar racial and religious bloc that would put in motion such external and internal controversies as would render vain any effort to control, influence or deal with problems concerning [its] single parts...It seems to me that the whole plan to encourage a consolidation of the Arab world is full of dangers of many kinds.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Myron Taylor to Cordell Hull, 14 March 1944, Ennio DiNolfo, *Vaticano e Stati Uniti dalle carte di Myron C. Taylor* (Milan, 1978); 311. Taylor’s concerns about a pan-Arab confederation was in reference to George Antonius’ influential 1938 book, *The Arab Awakening*, which called for a stronger political

Similar apprehensions towards Arab nationalism in Palestine could be found both in the Vatican's press organs and in American Catholic periodicals from the 1920's forward.

The plan to divide Palestine appeared to create for the Holy See a 'worst of both worlds' political scenario: a situation whereby two non-Christian states would be created, each of which would presumably pose challenges to Roman Catholic influence in the region. Given the broad-based support for partition, however (particularly that of the United States, Britain, and a clutch of predominantly Catholic South American states), an outright denunciation of the plan to divide Palestine between the Arabs and the Jews, either from Rome or from leaders of the American Church, was fraught with risks. The Vatican remained keen to maintain sound relations with the United States, and was reluctant to create a breach with Washington by an open rejection of the partition plan. This was particularly so considering that the Italian Communist Party (PCI) continued to expand its political influence on the peninsula, a threat the Vatican would need continued American assistance to contain.

In lieu of UN trusteeship for Palestine, which Maglione considered optimal, Vatican policymakers seized upon promises made in the partition plan to maintain Jerusalem as a UN administered international zone, a '*corpus separatum*' protecting the

synthesis between the Arab peoples of the Middle East, and specifically proposed a 'Greater Syria' which would encompass, among other territories, most of Palestine. The idea was as alarming to the Vatican as was the program of Zionism, as both threatened the Church in the Holy Land.

Holy Places by placing neither Jews nor Arabs in control of the Old City.⁷⁶ In this way, the holiest sites of Christendom would remain outside of the political jurisdiction of a non-Christian sovereign power, preserving for the Roman Catholic Church at least a base for continued influence in the region.

Leading figures in the American hierarchy were similarly wary of the prospects of either Arab or Jewish control of Palestine. New York's Mgr. Thomas McMahon, who would advocate tirelessly on behalf of the Holy See as the head of the New York Based Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA) from 1943 to 1955, expressed American Catholic support for UN trusteeship of Palestine as early as June 1945, when he weighed in on the options for the territory: "Palestine is international, an international UN government is another idea proposed; the idea is good, in fact far better than the others, because it does safeguard the sacred character of Christ's homeland."⁷⁷ By 1947, however, American churchmen, in accord with the views of the Vatican secretariat, had accepted the partition of Palestine as a virtual inevitability, and focused their efforts on guaranteeing the maintenance of Jerusalem as an international '*corpus separatum*'. Spellman, the foremost figure in American Catholicism, expressed as much to an American diplomat in January 1947, stating that though the Catholic Church "strongly [opposed] any form of partition, primarily on the ground that the whole of the land [was] sacred to Christ", he conceded that "a carefully conceived, detailed regime of guarantees

⁷⁶ The 'Old City' is a one-square kilometre area with the larger city which, until the mid-19th century, constituted the entire city. It contains many of the sites sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims, including the Temple Mount and the Wailing Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Dome of the Rock.

⁷⁷ Thomas J. McMahon, 'Threat to the Holy Places', *Sign*, June 1945. Archives, Catholic Near East Welfare Association (Hereafter A-CNEWA), Mgr. Thomas McMahon Papers (Hereafter TMP), Box 6, Folder 7.

and safeguards for the Holy Places and for the Christian minorities, both under the supervision of appropriate organs of the United Nations”, would be the least that the Church would expect in properly resolving the ‘Palestine Question’.⁷⁸

That the Vatican and the American bishops so quickly conceded defeat on the partition plan spoke volumes on the limits of Vatican diplomacy in the early Cold War. The close cooperation of the American bishops and Washington on a number of areas of mutual concern, combined with staunch American support of the partition plan, effectively nullified the Vatican’s longstanding opposition to a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Within a matter of weeks, Gasparri’s 1922 *Aide Mémoire*, which had been trotted out frequently to outline the Vatican’s longstanding policy, had been rendered a dead letter. The prospect of a *corpus separatum* for Jerusalem, however, appeared as a chance to salvage a victory from the jaws of defeat, a chance for the Vatican to save-face on the Palestine question, and to preserve the very heart of the Terra Santa from either Jewish or Jordanian sovereign control. Supporting the plan, moreover, would allow for a continuation of fruitful relations between the Vatican, the American bishops and Washington, a tripartite relationship which appeared to be bearing fruit. Vatican figures, no doubt, also saw in the plan the potential for papal control in Jerusalem, another factor contributing to Catholic acquiescence on the partition plan. Though anti-Zionist sentiment continued to be expressed in both Vatican and American Catholic quarters, particularly in the context of delays to the internationalization of Jerusalem, the establishment of a *corpus separatum* became the focal point of Catholic lobbying from

⁷⁸ Kreutz, *Vatican Policy on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, 93.

the summer of 1947 forward. Truman, on his part, sensing the Catholic stand down on the partition plan, specifically vowed “support for the internationalization of Jerusalem and the protection of the Holy Places in Palestine” in the Democratic platform for 1948, evidence of the President’s careful politicking on the Palestine question.⁷⁹ American Catholics, both in Washington and at the UN, would now strenuously advocate for just such an outcome.

The NCWC ‘Office for UN Affairs’ and the ‘Jerusalem Question’

The NCWC, established in 1919 as a permanent replacement for the National Catholic War Council (NCWC) had, by 1945, served as the organizational nerve centre of the Catholic Church in the United States for nearly three decades.⁸⁰ Essentially a council of the American bishops, its various bodies and departments had lobbied the American government on a variety of domestic and international questions pertinent to Roman Catholic interests, which had included Washington’s interwar relations with Spain and Mexico.⁸¹ As the first bureaucracy of a major religious denomination to be headquartered in the national capital, the NCWC was specifically mandated to “organize, unify and coordinate Catholic activities for the general welfare of the Church, near the seat of

⁷⁹ ‘Excerpt from the Democratic Platform for 1948’, May 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 20, File 44. The same document also provides an excerpt from the Republican platform, which makes no mention of internationalization, and instead outlines a robust support for Israel from the Republican Party, which was “the first to call for the establishment of a free and independent Jewish Commonwealth.”

⁸⁰ On the origins and establishment of the NCWC, see Joseph M. McShane, *Sufficiently Radical: Catholicism, Progressivism and the Bishop’s Program of 1919* (Washington, 1986).

⁸¹ On American Catholic pressure on the State Department regarding American policy vis-a-vis Mexico and Spain, as discussed briefly in chapter 2, see George Q. Flynn, *Roosevelt and Romanism: Catholics and American Diplomacy, 1937-1945* (London, 1976); Flynn’s *American Catholics and the Roosevelt Presidency, 1932-1936* (Lexington, 1968); and Matthew Redinger’s *American Catholics and the Mexican Revolution, 1924-1936* (Notre Dame, 2005).

federal power.”⁸² By 1945 the organization, emboldened by an increasingly intimate relationship with the American government and by the steady growth of the Church in the United States, continued in its attempts to shape domestic and international questions along lines amenable to the Roman Catholic Church.

An American Catholic presence at the UN was deemed vital, both by the Vatican and by the NCWC, in attempts to communicate a ‘Catholic’ worldview to the nascent world body, and was in line with Pope Pius XII’s support of the new world organization and its objectives. Though the Vatican was wary of an international forum that afforded the Soviet Union a significant ‘seat at the table’, it remained optimistic that the UN would be central to the construction of a peaceable world order. Soon after the war, the Pope expressed his admiration for the global body and its quest for world peace. “Nobody”, he intoned, “who has taken to his breast, as a sacred obligation, the fight for a worthy peace should renounce the use of this possibility, however limited it may be, to stir up the conscience of the world from a place so high and clear.”⁸³

That the UN was based in the north eastern United States, first at Lake Success, New York and later in New York City itself, made the NCWC a natural focal point for Roman Catholic advocacy at the new world body. The NCWC first appointed consultants to the 1945 United Nations Conference on International Organization (UNCIO) at San Francisco, where delegates lobbied to modify the Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta proposals along lines suggested in Pope Pius XII’s *Five Point Peace Program* of 1945, and the

⁸² Joseph Rossi, *Uncharted Territory: The American Catholic Church at the United Nations, 1946-1972* (Washington, 2006): xi.

⁸³ *America*, ‘Pope Urges Support of the United Nations’, 15 November 1947, 171.

American hierarchies annual statements *On International Order* (1944) and *On Organizing World Peace* (1945).⁸⁴ Though American Catholic delegates experienced frustration at San Francisco in placing a Catholic stamp on the UN charter, the NCWC was sufficiently encouraged to appoint a permanent observer at the UN, someone who could track developments at the various agencies, prepare summaries of debates for use by the bishops and by the Catholic press, and who, when opportunity merited, advance Catholic perspectives and positions among members of the world body. The NCWC's Father Edward Conway, S.J., who was charged with creating the organization's UN office, also envisaged the post as creating a bridge between the American Catholic Church and the American delegation to the UN, producing an envoy who could serve in the dual capacity of "rapporteur to the NCWC and as liaison between the NCWC and the American delegation."⁸⁵

On 11 September 1946, the NCWC's 'Office for UN Affairs' was formally established, using office space in Spellman's New York archdiocesan headquarters. The establishment of the office was not a surprise, given the growing consensus among the bishops of the advantage of having an NCWC observer at the UN.⁸⁶ The choice to lead the new office was, however, unorthodox. In August, at the behest of Chicago's Cardinal Samuel Stritch, Catherine Schaefer, an officer in the powerful lay National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) was tabbed to head the new endeavour. Schaefer's selection,

⁸⁴ On the American bishops' statements, see Raphael Huber, *Our Bishops Speak National Pastorals and Annual Statements of the Hierarchy of the United States* (Milwaukee, 1951): 121-130.

⁸⁵ Edward Conway to Howard Carroll, Washington, 31 May 1946, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 1, File 11.

⁸⁶ Samuel Stritch to Howard Carroll, 14 May 1946, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 23.

given the availability of more senior candidates, and given the male-dominated culture of the NCWC, was significant. It was particularly so as Conway, who had been central to conceiving the mandate of such an office, had also coveted the position. Dr. Ross Hoffman, chairman of the department of history at Fordham University, who had served as an occasional NCWC observer at the Security Council sessions, had also expressed an interest.⁸⁷ Schaefer's selection, then, spoke volumes on the faith which senior figures placed in her ability to succeed in such a role.

In addition to her role with the NCCW, Schaefer had also been employed in the NCWC's Social Action department, where she worked as an assistant to its director, Father Raymond McGowan. The Social Action department had been established in 1920 to promote the social thought of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, and used Catholic doctrine and papal teachings as guides to framing solutions to modern social questions. The department examined questions both domestic and international, with a particular eye on the threat that communism posed to the interests of the international Church. Schaefer's role in working with McGowan in this capacity, which included the writing of speeches and the production of books and pamphlets, impressed upon him her potential in an even larger capacity. In August 1945, Schaefer was appointed by McGowan as the NCWC observer to the UNCIO meetings in San Francisco, further evidence of his growing confidence in his assistant. Her appointment to the new office was a clear reflection of her growing reputation at the NCWC. As the office expanded in importance in the years after 1946, and as it became central to

⁸⁷ Ross Hoffman to Howard Carroll, 3 June 1946, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 53, File 22.

American Catholic attempts to shape the Palestine question, the bishops would be well pleased with the selection of Schaefer.

Once in New York, her ambitions extended beyond the initial mandate of the office. Though she had been authorized to observe and report on developments at the UN for the purposes of keeping the American bishops updated and informed, it was clear that her vision for the office extended further. She clearly conceived of an activist office that sought contact both with other Catholic organizations at the UN, as well as international NGO's and delegations. Six months after she had established the office, she revealed this vision in an annual report to Carroll. "As Catholics at the UN get to know each other better," she apprised Carroll, "and as Catholic organizations are admitted to consultative relationships, the utility of the NCWC's Office for UN Affairs should increase, in the informational, liaison and other assistance it may be able to render, and in its efforts to integrate Catholic principles into the formal action and atmosphere of the UN and of international life, and to inform Catholics of developments to which these principles might be applied."⁸⁸

As such, in addition to observing and reporting on the numerous sessions and committees, Schaefer actively sought to build bridges between the major American and international Catholic organizations accredited to the UN. In this respect, her objectives appeared to have been the establishment of an "international Catholic circle" along the

⁸⁸ 'Report of the NCWC Office of UN Affairs: 1 October 1946- 1 August 1947', NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 40.

lines of which had existed among the Catholic powers at the League of Nations.⁸⁹ She also envisioned the NCWC's office as the co-ordinating body for those delegations. Within months of the establishment of the office, Schaefer had established links with a number of international Catholic observer groups at the UN, including the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions, the International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues, Caritas International and Pax Romana. By the end of 1946, the NCWC office was already established as the "convening agent" for American Catholic observer groups at the UN, which included the powerful NCCW and the Catholic Association for International Peace (CAIP).⁹⁰

Schaefer's office monitored a number of issues relevant to Catholic interests, including the development of the UN's Bill of Human Rights, the status of and assistance to European refugees (particularly Catholics), religious freedom in Eastern Europe, the development of UNICEF, and a variety of other questions. No issue, however, commanded the time and attention of the office as did the 'Palestine Question' and, specifically from the spring of 1947 forward, the status of Jerusalem as an internationally administered *corpus separatum*. In addition to producing a monthly bulletin on UN affairs entitled 'Foreign Affairs', which summarized aspects of the various debates winding through the UN, the office also produced numerous reports specifically examining the debates on Jerusalem. By 1950, Schaefer and her later assistant, Alba

⁸⁹ 'Report of the NCWC Office for UN Affairs: October 1, 1946- August 1, 1947', 5, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 40. Quoted in Rossi, *Uncharted Territory*, 8.

⁹⁰ On Schaefer's attempts to build links between the various Catholic observer missions to the UN, see, for example, Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, [New York], 'Status of Catholic Organizational Representation at the UN', 8 July 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 7.

Zizzamia, had produced nearly forty lengthy and detailed memoranda on a variety of aspects on the Palestine issue, providing a key source of information on the debate for both the American hierarchy and the Catholic press.⁹¹ On a number of occasions over the same period, the Holy See also requested Schaefer's memos and monthly bulletins, evidence of the importance the Vatican placed on the NCWC's UN office as a source of information.⁹² It would not be until 1964, in fact, that the Vatican appointed its own permanent observer to the UN, underscoring the importance of Schaefer's office as a clearinghouse of information for the international Church.⁹³

From the formulation of the partition plan in the summer of 1947 to the creation of the State of Israel in May 1948 (when Britain formally absconded from the mandate and withdrew its troops from the territory), Schaefer's office (which consisted, remarkably, of herself and a secretary) kept the NCWC apprised of the myriad debates on the 'Palestine Question'. This included a series of reports in the spring of 1947 which

⁹¹ See, for example, 'Annual Report: 1950: NCWC Office for United Nations Affairs and Bureau of Information', 23, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 40. Schaefer's monthly reports, organized as lengthy bulletins and entitled 'Foreign Affairs: A Survey of Trends', were forwarded regularly to NCWC headquarters in Washington, where their contents were disseminated and debated by the bishops, the Catholic press, and the various departments and committees of the NCWC. See, for example, 'Foreign Affairs: A Survey of Trends', December 1946, 2-3, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 158, File 4; 'Foreign Affairs', November 1947, 16-18, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 158, File 5; 'Foreign Affairs', December 1947, 17-18, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 158, File 6.

⁹² These requests were normally channelled through the Apostolic Delegate in Washington, Amleto Cicognani, to the General Secretary of the NCWC, Howard Carroll. See, for example, Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll, 20 November 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 160, File 7; Howard Carroll to Catherine Schaefer, 10 May 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 8; Howard Carroll to Amleto Cicognani, 17 May 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 127, File 10.

⁹³ Pope Paul VI appointed Monsignor Alberto Giovanetti as the Holy See's first 'permanent observer' to the UN in March 1964. See Joseph Rossi, 'The Relation of the Apostolic Delegation to the United Nations: 1945-1964', *U.S. Catholic Historian* 12, 2 (Spring 1994): 91-105. Rossi contends that while the relationship between the Apostolic Delegation and the NCWC 'UN Office' were distant during Amleto Cicognani's tenure (1938-1958), it became much more intimate during the tenure of Egidio Vagnozzi, Apostolic Delegate to the United States from 1958 to 1967.

revealed the stands of various states on the partition plan itself, from Arab (Egyptian, Iraqi, Lebanese, and Syrian) calls for an Arab-dominated state, to a disparate collection of states (including the United States and Britain, but also Czechoslovakia, Guatemala and Uruguay) who favoured the creation of both an Arab and a Jewish state (as was envisioned by the partition plan).⁹⁴ Schaefer consistently tracked the question of the protection of the Holy Places in Palestine, an issue central to both the Vatican and American Catholic interests. She expressed concern in the early stages of the UNSCOP meetings that Christian rights in the Holy Land were not a priority to delegates, citing the refusal of UNSCOP to grant a hearing to the CNEWA, who wished to speak “in the interests of universal Christendom in the Holy Places.”⁹⁵

During the April-May 1947 meetings that led to the creation of UNSCOP Schaefer, while reporting that the Christian stake in Palestine “did not receive much formal discussion”, was encouraged by a draft resolution passed by El Salvador on 7 May, which recommended that careful consideration be given to “the interests of the Christian world in the Holy Land and of the Christian population of Palestine.”⁹⁶ The following day, the Brazilian delegation, along with a number of smaller South American states, endorsed the “religious interests” clause. The inclusion of the clause was eventually passed by a vote of twenty-seven in favour, nine opposed and sixteen

⁹⁴ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll [New York], ‘Special Session on Palestine’, 28 April- 16 May 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, 4. According to the report, the CNEWA was denied a hearing on the grounds that “the request originated with [an] organization established outside Palestine and not directly [representing] the population of that country.” The CNEWA was, however, heard by UNSCOP following the latter’s formal creation in May 1947.

⁹⁶ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Christian Rights in Holy Land are Given Attention, 17 May 1947, 1.

abstaining, with Russia, which had been steadfastly opposed to its inclusion, representing the most notable of opposing states. In later meetings, both Schaefer and representatives of the CAIP raised the issue of the Christian stake in Palestine, receiving the assurances of the American ambassador to the UN, Warren Austin, that concern for Christian rights in the territory would receive the full consideration of UNSCOP delegates.⁹⁷

It was at this point, in the spring of 1947, that Schaefer's office began to more actively press the Catholic case at the UN. The positions presented by Schaefer were, of course, formulated by the American bishops, and closely mirrored the Vatican's own desires for the territory. In April, the NCWC formulated a detailed position paper on Roman Catholic demands for the future of Palestine. In May, Schaefer forwarded copies of the NCWC's 'Resolution on the Holy Places' to both Austin and Chester Williams, public liaison of the American delegation to the UN, which stated that:

...all our sanctuaries will be respected and continuously and unconditionally accessible, and that the Christian minority will actually enjoy not merely that vague, frequently distorted and facetiously neutralized right of freedom of religion, but also freedom of religious assemblage, freedom of religious organization in conducting schools, orphanages, hospitals, and other institutions of welfare and mercy and freedom from civil, social and economic discrimination.⁹⁸

In the same month, Schaefer presented the lengthier NCWC position paper on the future of the Holy Land to UNSCOP. Penned by James Griffiths, who had been

⁹⁷ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 'Special Session on Palestine', NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38, 6. For a detailed examination of the development of American policy on Jerusalem in this crucial period, see Yossi Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem* (New York, 1987): 7-58.

⁹⁸ 'NCWC Resolution on the Holy Places', 19 May 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18. The demands set forth by the NCWC in 1947 were taken up by Pius XII himself in April 1949, when his encyclical *Redemptoris Nostri* repeated these demands, and called for the full internationalization of Jerusalem.

appointed by Spellman as chancellor of the Military Ordinariate in 1943, the statement represented as comprehensive an American Catholic position on the future of Palestine yet.⁹⁹ It argued, chiefly, that the Palestinian problem was “not merely bipartite, but tripartite” and that Christian rights had for too long been ignored in the struggle between Jews and Arabs for control of the territory.¹⁰⁰ It emphasized that for the world’s 700 million Christians, the territory was sacred, representing “the cradle of their religion.” The document emphasized the historical legitimacy of Christian claims to the territory, and rejected suggestions that they be relocated to neighbouring Christian states, such as Lebanon. “The Christians of Palestine are not new arrivals”, it declared. “They have been there for nearly twenty centuries. They are rooted in the subsoil of their Holy Land. They have suffered every type of totalitarian persecution and countless thousands have shed their blood precisely because they would not disavow the principles of the Master whose land was their land. The Christian minority has been reluctantly tolerated, civically ostracized and economically pauperized because they have clung to the teachings of Christ in the very footsteps of Christ.”¹⁰¹ The document continued to endorse the British ‘White Paper’ of 1939, which advocated an international trusteeship for the territory, while permitting the complete internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs as the minimally acceptable solution to the Roman Catholic Church. Finally, the statement raised the Bolshevik spectre, tying Roman Catholic concerns for the future of Palestine to

⁹⁹ Griffiths would remain involved in the ‘UN Office’ for the remainder of his career, being appointed by Pope John XXIII as the Holy See’s ‘observer’ at UN headquarters in 1958.

¹⁰⁰ James H. Griffiths to Archbishop John T. McNicholas [New York], ‘Memorandum on the Christian Factor in the Palestine Equation’, 17 April 1947, 1-6, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 3.

wider Cold War objectives. In insinuating that Moscow had already “infiltrated” the territory through the state-controlled Russian Orthodox Church, it argued that the protection of Christian (and specifically Roman Catholic) rights was imperative to checking the spread of communism in the region.¹⁰² The statement was disseminated by Schaefer during the UNSCOP special committee, and it received wide coverage in the Catholic press, apprising American Catholics of the Church’s detailed position on the Holy Land.¹⁰³

The activism of American Zionist observer groups at the UN was not unknown to Schaefer, and provided additional impetus to her lobbying efforts. The importance Schaefer placed upon disseminating and publicizing the American Catholic viewpoint was lauded by Karol Krczmary, a Catholic and member of the Czechoslovakian delegation, who assured her that the influence of observer organizations such as the NCWC and the CAIP was significant, and that Jewish observer organizations at the UN, including the Jewish Agency for Palestine (which included powerful American Zionist leaders such as Nahum Goldman and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver), the American Jewish Committee and the World Jewish Congress, were “operating like mad” with UNSCOP delegates.¹⁰⁴ Along with advocating Catholic positions, Schaefer’s office also tracked the positions of the various American Jewish and Zionist observer groups at the UN which, in general, favoured the partition plan and accepted the internationalization of Jerusalem

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 5.

¹⁰³ See, for example, the *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Christian Rights in Holy Land are Given Attention’, 17 May 1947, 1.

¹⁰⁴ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 2 May 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 6.

as a necessary concession in gaining a sovereign Jewish state. This also included, however, a number of anti-Zionist Jewish groups, which often worked at cross-purposes with mainstream Zionist organizations, and emphasized the need for a strengthened international Jewish consciousness and greater protections under international law, but which did not advocate for a political and juridical state. In May, Schaefer forwarded the policy of one such UN-accredited group, the Agudas Israel World Organization, back to the NCWC for the use of the bishops and the press office.¹⁰⁵ In May and June, the diocesan press delineated the program of Augudas Israel in a range of papers, emphasizing that Zionist designs for Palestine were not the only viable solutions for the territory.

By the fall of 1947, Schaefer had developed a significant list of contacts within the various delegation and committees to the UN. Among American delegates, this included Austin and Williams and later Secretary of State George Marshall, who confided to Schaefer and other Catholic observers in October that Jewish groups were concerned that the United States was not “pressing its position on Palestine with enough strength”, and was not doing enough in “getting the votes out” for the partition plan.¹⁰⁶ Schaefer also maintained contacts with members of delegations sympathetic to Roman Catholic concerns on Palestine, which often included Catholic and Arab states. These delegates, which comprised numerous chiefs of missions, included Mahmoud Hassan Pasha of

¹⁰⁵ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 2 May 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 6, 1-3.

¹⁰⁶ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 22 October 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 7. Marshall implored his guests that his comments were strictly off the record, though Schaefer relayed the information back to the NCWC that same afternoon. Marshall had never granted avid support to Zionist designs, and likely sympathized with Roman Catholic concerns for the future of the Holy Land.

Egypt, Asaf Ali of India, Dr. Fadhil Jamali of Iraq, and Dr. Ramon Muniz of Brazil, among others. Schaefer's closest contact at the UN between 1947 and the early 1950's, however, remained the head of the Lebanese delegation, Dr. Charles Malik (whom Schaefer described as an "intensely sincere Christian"), who consistently pressed positions amenable to Roman Catholic interests in Palestine, and who consistently apprised Schaefer of committee-level progress, and setbacks, on the 'Palestine Question.'

¹⁰⁷ Malik, in fact, would become a key ally of the NCWC and Schaefer's office as the UN debate on fate of Jerusalem wore on in the later 1940's. His own reputation undoubtedly lent additional credence to Roman Catholic claims at the UN. A graduate of Harvard and a student of philosophers Alfred North Whitehead and Martin Heidegger (on whom Malik wrote his doctoral dissertation), he had served as the Lebanese ambassador to the United States and the UN from 1945 to 1948. As a rapporteur for the Commission on Human Rights, he was instrumental in the drafting and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. In the same year, he was named president of the UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), underscoring the influence and clout that he wielded at the world body.

Though both American Catholic and Protestant groups were present at the UN in observer roles, evidence suggests that coherence and cooperation between them, particularly on the question of Palestine, was not particularly close. This was despite the fact that both Catholic and Protestant groups shared a basic concern for the future of

¹⁰⁷ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 'Memorandum- Jerusalem', 26 April 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 26. Malik was a key figure at the UN in these years, eventually chairing the Social Committee and central to the formulation of the seminal 1948 'UN Bill of Human Rights.'

Palestine, particularly in regard to the protection of the Holy Places.¹⁰⁸ Most mainline Protestant Churches, like the Roman Catholic Church, favoured neither Arab nor Jewish control over Palestine, but rather an international trusteeship for the territory administered by the UN. This sentiment was expressed by the Rev. William Clark-Kerr, moderator of the Jerusalem Presbytery of the Church of Scotland, in July 1947. As one of the first Christian leaders to testify before the UNSCOP special committee on religious freedoms in Palestine, he declared that “at least, to the Western Christian mind, this whole country is holy”, suggesting that plans to protect only Christian heritage sights and their immediate surroundings were futile and ill-advised.¹⁰⁹ Clark-Kerr’s notion was seconded by a majority of Protestant leaders on both sides of the Atlantic, including Dr. Cyril Forster Garbett, Anglican Archbishop of York, who intoned in a radio address early in 1948 that “no one who has personal knowledge of Jerusalem believes that it is practical to divide it in this way”, and warned that any such attempt “would lead to endless trouble and bloodshed.”¹¹⁰

In the same address, the Archbishop urged American Christians to “do all they [could] for the protection of their fellow Christians in Palestine from persecution, and of the Holy Places from desecration.” He asked them, in addition, “to use their great influence to save Palestine from lapsing into anarchy.”¹¹¹ Despite his sentiment, Catholic-Protestant joint action on the question of Palestine was not particularly strong. Schaefer

¹⁰⁸ On the Protestant Churches and Palestine, see Hertzell Fishman, *American Protestantism and a Jewish State* (Detroit, 1973).

¹⁰⁹ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Back Christians in Holy Land’, 19 July 1947, 6.

¹¹⁰ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Freedom for Christians in Palestine Demanded’, 24 January 1948, 3.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

alluded to this early in 1948, when she revealed that relations with Protestant observer groups at the UN “were friendly and cooperative when possible”, but that in some cases, “it had been impossible to enlist active cooperation.”¹¹² Eliciting a joint Catholic-Protestant statement on the Palestine issue was one such area of contention. In April 1947 Samuel McCrea Cavert, General Secretary of the (Protestant) Churches of Christ in America (CCA) approached the NCWC’s General Secretary, Howard Carroll, on the possibility of releasing a “parallel Catholic-Protestant statement on Palestine”, emphasizing to Carroll that “it was not only Jews and Arabs that had a vital interest in Palestine.”¹¹³ At an NCWC board meeting later in the same month, the question of a joint statement was raised, and it was determined that no such parallel stand would be issued. It was also determined that any Catholic statement would be vetted by the Apostolic Delegate, Amleto Cicognani, “so that the Holy See...would have the opportunity, if time permitted, to offer suggestions on the topic.”¹¹⁴ At the same meeting, the Holy See’s 1922 *aide memoire* on Palestine was again circulated to attending bishops, emphasizing the degree to which Roman policies continued to guide American Catholic responses to the issue, despite rapid developments ‘on the ground’ in Palestine. No Catholic response on the question of a parallel statement was issued until early May, when the CCA forwarded the NCWC a draft of their own statement, at which time Carroll informed the Protestant

¹¹² Schaefer to Carroll, ‘Stay in Paris: September 19- October 2, 1947’, 3. NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 53, File 17. Schaefer mentioned specifically the inclusion of ‘God’ in the 1947 Human Rights declaration, to which several Protestant groups had resisted.

¹¹³ Samuel Cavert to Howard Carroll, 10 April 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18. Cavert had been approached by American ambassador William Phillips, who had served on the 1946 Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, and who felt that a Catholic-Protestant joint statement might carry considerable clout.

¹¹⁴ Howard Carroll to Archbishop John McNicholas, 22 April 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

body that his organization had not yet formulated their own definitive statement.¹¹⁵

Schaefer, as noted, presented the NCWC's position to the UNSCOP special committee on Palestine just weeks later, evidence that the American bishops had, in fact, been preparing a policy statement for the UN. While Catholic and Protestant groups shared a cluster of concerns on the future of the Holy Land, the NCWC preferred to steer an independent course, advocating in parallel lines with Protestant organizations on certain issues, but rarely in close cooperation or conjunction.

Contributing to tenuous Catholic-Protestant cooperation on the Palestine question was the demand by certain Protestant groups for the recall of Myron Taylor from Rome, on the grounds that his appointment violated the American constitutional separation of church and state. From the fall of 1946 forward, groups such as the Northern Baptist Convention agitated loudly for the removal of Taylor, publicly urging Truman, a Baptist himself, to terminate the office of his 'personal representative' to the Holy See. This was despite a general support of the Taylor mission in the secular press, including an editorial in New York's *Herald Tribune* by former Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles, which emphasized the strategic advantages of Taylor's posting. The Taylor mission was also endorsed by several prominent Protestant leaders, who similarly noted the benefits of a Vatican link.¹¹⁶ These included Harold Staasen, a Baptist and former governor of Minnesota, who expressed in May 1947 that "in this postwar situation of world emergency and of conflicting ideological views, if President Truman wishes to have a

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ See the *New York Herald Tribune*, 'End of Agitation on Myron Taylor Mission is Asked: Former Under Secretary Welles Avers Peace and Unity are Reasons for Assignment', 15 January 1947, 4.

representative at the Vatican, that it is not the kind of situation either constructive or helpful for [Baptists] to protest.”¹¹⁷ He was seconded by Dr. Everett Clinchy, founder and first president of the interfaith National Conference for Christians and Jews (NCCJ), who stated that there was “nothing in the [Taylor] mission which need alarm any sincere Protestant.”¹¹⁸ Despite this, the chorus of anti-Taylor rhetoric among a number of mainstream Protestant groups continued to grow. Spellman, in his customary fashion, did little to assuage Catholic-Protestant tensions over the Taylor mission, attributing opposition to the mission to “the anti-Catholicism of un-hooded Klansmen sowing seeds of dissension and disunion.”¹¹⁹ The situation was strained further in August 1947, when a public exchange of letters between President Truman and Pope Pius XII, which emphasized the common stand of the United States and the Vatican in the postwar world order, also served to strengthen the president’s commitment to Taylor’s mission, and further piqued Protestant groups committed to his recall.¹²⁰

The representations of Schaefer’s ‘UN Office’, then, were to remain distinctly Roman Catholic in character, advocating for positions that emanated specifically from the American bishops and, ultimately, the Vatican. Joint statements with other Christian

¹¹⁷ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Deplores Protestant Attacks on Catholics: Harold E. Staasen Assails Baptist Convention for Rapping Supreme Court and Vatican Appointment’, 31 May 1947, 6.

¹¹⁸ *Boston Pilot*, ‘Taylor Mission to Vatican Defended’, 25 January 1947, 1; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘End of Agitation on Myron Taylor Mission is Asked’, 18 January 1947, 3.

¹¹⁹ ‘Editorial Research Reports: Relations with the Vatican’, 12 February 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 11, File 1.

¹²⁰ See NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 18, Harry S. Truman to Pius XII, 6 August 1947, 1-2; NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 18, Pius XII to Harry S. Truman, 26 August 1947, 1-3. On American Catholic press coverage of the exchange of letters, see the *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘U.S. and Vatican Stand Together for World Peace’, 30 August 1947: 1; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Taylor’s Mission to Vatican Seen as More Important’, 6 September 1947: 1.

denominations were to be avoided, a reflection of the Vatican's desire to claim its own independent stake in the future of Palestine. Schaefer's efforts over the spring and summer of 1947 did not go unrewarded. That the internationalization of Jerusalem was enshrined in the November partition plan could be credited to the persistent pressure of both Catholic and Arab states and observer organizations to the UN, exemplified by the NCWC's 'UN Office', which raised the issue clearly and consistently over these crucial months.

The CNEWA and the 'Palestine Question'

The NCWC's 'UN Office' was seconded on the Palestine question by the New York based and Vatican funded Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA). Founded in 1926 by Pope Pius XI, and headed from its inception by American churchmen, the association's original mandate was to develop links between the Roman Catholic Church and Russia. The provision of aid to famine-stricken Russians was intended to create a beach-head for future evangelization, as well as create a *modus vivendi* with bolshevism, which the Vatican had long since identified as a grave ideological threat. By 1945, the Vatican had long since abandoned any pretence of normalized relations with Moscow, particularly in light of the severe repressions against Roman Catholic bishops and cardinals in the Soviet sphere.

The CNEWA, however, was never formally suspended, and in 1931 was placed under the perpetual control of the American hierarchy. The Archbishop of New York, resolved Pope Pius XI, would serve in perpetuity as the association's president. In 1945, the CNEWA received a revived mandate in to deal specifically with the Christian

populations of Palestine and the wider region. Spellman, who as Archbishop of New York also assumed the presidency of the CNEWA, took a keen interest in the advocacy of the association, particularly as it pertained to postwar Palestine. In June 1943 he named thirty-three year old Mgr. Thomas McMahon, a priest in the New York Archdiocese, as the association's assistant national secretary, a position he would hold until 1955. Upon his appointment, McMahon had been professor of Church history at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, having recently completed a doctoral degree at Fordham University.¹²¹ Though he had served, in 1935, as a secretary at the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Churches in Rome (the Vatican congregation which controlled the CNEWA), his selection was unexpected, given his age and the gravity of such a posting. His appointment as Master of Ceremonies to Spellman in the same month, however, indicated the close working relationship between McMahon and the most powerful figure in American Catholicism.¹²² The appointment would move McMahon from the obscurity of the seminary to the head of an association which wielded significant financial clout, and with a mandate to defend Roman Catholic interests in the Holy Land. In short order, in fact, Spellman and McMahon would become leading advocates, both for the American hierarchy and for the international Church, on the question of Palestine. Under their leadership, the CNEWA would play a crucial role in the Vatican's attempts to steer American and UN policy toward lines amenable to the Church. In the immediate postwar period, this of course meant an international trusteeship for Palestine, which both the Vatican and American Catholic leaders considered optimal. McMahon had proposed

¹²¹ 'Biographical Data- Mgr. Thomas J. McMahon', 1945, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 6, Folder 7.

¹²² *Ibid.*

trusteeship as early as 1945, when in the Catholic journal *Sign* he advocated for the internationalization of the whole territory, citing the example of Trieste (which was internationalized in July 1946). “No partition of the Holy Land can satisfy us”, he exclaimed, “because some part of it would thereby be without Christ.”¹²³

By the summer of 1947 the Vatican and American Catholic leaders, for a number of factors (not least the surging support for Zionism in the United States), had come to regard the partition of Palestine as a *fait accompli*, and had turned their attention to ensuring the internationalization of Jerusalem as a means of preserving a base for Roman Catholic influence in the region, and protecting the rights of their co-religionists in the territory. Given the widespread support for partition, the Vatican did not publically oppose the plan. Spellman, however, apprised the state department of the Vatican’s revised objectives in January 1947. During a meeting with the American ambassador to Iraq, George Wadsworth, he expressed continued dismay with the partition plan, but he revealed that the Vatican would be willing to accept partition if it could be guaranteed the sanctity of Jerusalem and protection for Roman Catholics in Palestine.

If partition be imposed, the opportunity must not be lost to prescribe a carefully conceived, detailed regime of guarantees and safeguards for the Holy Places and for the Christian minorities, both under the supervision of the United Nations and the latter (i.e. provisions for the protection of Christian groups) to be such as might serve as a model, accepted by the Arab and all other Eastern states for the treatment of their religious minorities.¹²⁴

¹²³ *Sign*, ‘Threat to the Holy Places’, June 1945.

¹²⁴ Ferrari, ‘The Holy See and the Postwar Palestine Issue’, 264.

The statement would represent the essence of both Vatican and American Catholic visions for Palestine from the spring of 1947 forward, providing a mission statement for Roman Catholic advocacy both in Washington and at the UN.

The CNEWA, like the NCWC, attempted to transmute a Roman Catholic vision for the future of Palestine directly to the UN, commencing with the UNSCOP special committee on Palestine in the spring of 1947. As an ‘observer’ group at the UN, however, the CNEWA, like its sister organization, was not permitted to present petitions or testimonials directly to UNSCOP, a situation which both Spellman and McMahon regarded as a threat to vital Roman Catholic interests in the territory. In early February McMahon, at the behest of Spellman, was granted a meeting with Senator Warren Austin, head of the American delegation to the UN, and Ambassador Wadsworth.¹²⁵ During the hour-long visit, McMahon detailed the Vatican’s demands for the territory, citing the internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs as a minimum starting point. McMahon, as he had in his 1945 *Sign* article, used the example of Trieste as a model of functional internationalization, and suggested a similar scheme be employed at the UN for Jerusalem. This suggestion, he reported optimistically to Spellman, “awakened a responsive chord in the Senator.”¹²⁶

Spellman, on his part, took full advantage of a meeting with the UN’s Political and Security Committee in early May, emphasizing the need for observer groups such as the CNEWA to be heard in committees and sub-committees, particularly on issues as

¹²⁵ Francis Spellman to Warren Austin, 15 February 1947, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 1, Folder 8.

¹²⁶ Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 21 February 1947, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 1, Folder 8.

crucial as the future of Palestine. During this meeting, Spellman presented the CNEWA's formal petition, penned by McMahon, which emphasized the necessity for a Christian, and specifically Roman Catholic, voice at the UNSCOP hearings. The statement refuted suggestions that the CNEWA did not directly represent the Christians of Palestine (a charge made by certain UNSCOP delegates who refuted the need to consider petitions and testimonies from faith organizations), emphasizing both the universality of the CNEWA's voice, as well as the international nature of the Palestine question itself. "It is our considered opinion that the CNEWA," it stated, "an international body, qualifies as an organizational representative of a considerable portion of the population of Palestine, since it officially represents the Roman Catholic population of Palestine. Moreover, the CNEWA, by its very nature and constitution and activities, is intimately concerned with the spiritual, moral educational and social interests of the Roman Catholic population, whether of the Latin or Eastern rites."¹²⁷

McMahon's petition also drew attention to the 1946 Anglo-American report, which maintained that no solution to the Palestine problem could be found without addressing the "religious phase" of the problem. The Catholic stake in the territory, McMahon insisted, had to be addressed. In emphasizing the international nature of the problem, and the legitimacy of the CNEWA's right to present its views, the statement continued that

...our Association foresees the necessity of honestly confronting other more extensive problems which are inextricably involved in the Palestinian question

¹²⁷ Thomas J. McMahon, 'CNEWA Petition to the UN Political and Security Committee', 10 May 1947. See *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Christian Rights in Holy Land are Given Attention', 17 May 1947: 1, 15-16.

and its solution which are the responsibility of Christians throughout the world...The character of Palestine sets it in a unique class, totally different from all other nations. The interests of universal Christendom in the Holy Land transcend the political and national interests of the minority Christian population of Palestine, which numbers 130, 750. Although there may be included in the personnel of the Arab Higher Committee one or two spokesmen for the Christian minority, nevertheless the Committee itself, by reason of its tradition, its leadership, its overwhelming Moslem majority and by the fact of its purpose to present the case for a predominantly Arab Moslem population of one million, cannot reasonably be charged with the task or expected to represent adequately the interests of universal Christendom in the Holy Land.¹²⁸

The statement suggested not only that the CNEWA would advocate for the rights of Roman Catholics in Palestine, but that it would represent “the interests of universal Christendom” on the question, clearly inferring that Spellman’s organization represented the desires of the Vatican and the international Church on the question of Palestine. Despite stiff opposition to the consideration of religious factors in debating the future of Palestine, including that of Soviet delegate Andrei Gromyko, who considered religious concerns “superfluous detail”, the ‘religious clause’ was accepted by UNSCOP after a heated two hour debate on 22 May.¹²⁹

Having won the right to submit its views to UNSCOP, the CNEWA presented a report to the Committee on 5 June 1947.¹³⁰ It stressed that the Roman Catholic Church

¹²⁸ *ibid*, 16.

¹²⁹ Though the CNEWA’s request to present a verbal statement to UNSCOP was rejected (as were similar requests from a number of American Zionist organizations, including the ZOA), it did win the right to submit a written statement. See Andrew Cordier to Thomas McMahon, 13 May 1947, A-CNEWA, Box 3, File 19.

¹³⁰ Thomas McMahon to the Special Committee on Palestine, 5 June 1947, Archives of the Archdiocese of Detroit (hereafter AAD), Archbishop Edward Mooney Papers, Box 39, File 6, 1-4. See also *Letter to the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine*, 5 June 1947 in Constantine Rackauskas, *The Internationalization of Palestine* (Washington, 1951): 73-78.

did not favour or endorse any particular political arrangement for Palestine, so long as the sanctity and the sovereignty of Jerusalem and the Holy Places was preserved, and that protections would be guaranteed for the Catholic population of the territory. Its commitment to political neutrality marked a shift away from the Vatican's early postwar desire for an international trusteeship for the whole territory. The statement echoed Pius XII's August 1946 address to the Arab Higher Committee for Palestine, when the Pope informed his guests at the Vatican that his Church did not favour either Jewish or Arab control of Palestine, proclaiming that the papal office "had always observed this attitude of perfect impartiality, even in the most diverse circumstances, and [intended] to conform thereto in the future as well."¹³¹ While the Pope's 1946 stance continued to implicitly endorse trusteeship, the CNEWA's 1947 representation to the UN revealed the Church's moderated demands, accepting internationalization of Jerusalem and juridical protections for Roman Catholics in lieu of its previous demands. As it was the CNEWA that officially represented the international Church in the Middle East, the 1947 statement can be read as a change in the 'official' policy of the Vatican itself. Gasparri's *aide mémoire* of 1922 had definitely been superseded by the circumscribed demands presented by McMahon. It was evidence, no doubt, of papal pragmatism on the question of Palestine, and was a policy designed to salvage core, non-negotiable rights in the territory while maintaining amicable relations with Washington.

As such, the statement strongly defended Roman Catholicism's ancient stake in the territory, highlighting twenty centuries of unbroken presence in Palestine, a presence

¹³¹ For the text of Pius XII's address to the Arab Higher Committee, see enclosure to Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll [New York], 29 August 1946, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

that had been “uncontrovertibly and juridically established since the thirteenth century.”¹³² It further asserted that “although persecuted and, indeed, decimated, [Roman Catholics] have never left or given up.”¹³³ It specifically refuted the claims of the ESCO Foundation for Palestine, which maintained in a 1946 publication that Christianity “was not an indigenous force in Palestine, although it [was] based on the life and teachings of Jesus. As an organized religion it is the creation of Rome and always represented in the East the introduction of a foreign civilization.”¹³⁴ McMahon termed this “spiritual jingoism and an intolerant indictment of Roman Catholics throughout the entire world.” In evoking the Crusader imagery that the Catholic press had so prominently employed in its anti-Zionist editorials, McMahon spoke to the centuries-long Roman Catholic struggle for the territory. “If only for these centuries of heroism, sacrifice and blood-letting,” he intoned, “Christendom can hardly be expected to stand by silently and be ignored, as your estimable Committee seeks an answer to the riddle of Palestine.”¹³⁵

The statement, however, did not dwell on historical precedent, analyzing the contemporary Roman Catholic stake in the Holy Land, including the extensive charitable and educational activities administered by the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem (the official representation of the Holy See in Palestine). This network included over 200 churches

¹³² Thomas McMahon to the Special Committee on Palestine, 5 June 1947, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 8, File 2.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ See *Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab and British Policies* (New Haven, 1946): 1: 534-536. The ESCO Foundation for Palestine was headed by Rose G Jacobs, an activist with the Hadassah, the Women’s Zionist Organization of America. ESCO, which was comprised of American civic leaders and academics, favoured a one-state solution for Palestine, but did not explicitly advocate for Jewish political dominion in the territory.

¹³⁵ Thomas McMahon to the Special Committee on Palestine, 5 June 1947, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 8, File 2.

and religious houses, 130 schools (which educated male and female students in almost equal numbers), and 30 charitable institutions, all of which, the statement continued, contributed to the stability and prosperity of both the Roman Catholic and wider community. McMahon, therefore, sought tangible guarantees for Roman Catholics and their institutions, which included “a freedom of religious organization and development, unimpaired by confiscatory taxation or disabling legislation, in building and conducting churches, schools, orphanages, hospitals and similar institutions of welfare and mercy.” In essence, McMahon sought concrete guarantees for the institutional livelihood of the Church in Palestine, regardless of the form of the regime decided upon by UNSCOP. His objective reflected that emanating from the Vatican secretariat itself, where safeguarding Roman Catholic interests through legal guarantees and the internationalization of Jerusalem had supplanted the grander desire of establishing a UN trusteeship for the entire territory.

That it was the CNEWA that spoke at the UN for Roman Catholic interests in the Holy Land, and not the Vatican directly or the Latin Patriarchate in Jerusalem (represented, at that time, by Monsignor Louis Barlassina), was made clear in the conclusion of McMahon’s statement.

This Association, under the presidency of His Eminence, Francis Cardinal Spellman of New York, is the sole official mission and relief agency of the Sacred Oriental Congregation in Rome. This Congregation, of which Pope Pius XII is direct superior, and Eugene Cardinal Tisserant, Secretary, has jurisdiction over all the above-mentioned activities of the Catholic Church in Palestine. Thus, our Association has an international scope and is expected to supply not only financial aid but also intellectual support, wherever the interests in the Holy Land are at stake. We fear that these Christian and Catholic interests may be

disregarded, and we consider it our bounden duty to indicate this to your Special Committee.¹³⁶

The statement concluded with a veiled warning that an infringement of the freedoms of Palestinian Roman Catholics, whose claims were as ancient as any of their compatriots, would be considered a “crime” against not only the indigenous Catholic community, but against the international Roman Catholic Church. “Indeed, because Palestine is the Holy Land for millions of Christians all over the world,” it exhorted, “this gigantic injustice would rightfully be resented by them and by all men of good will.”¹³⁷

In the weeks after the submission of the CNEWA statement, McMahon received the assurances of both Arab and Jewish leaders that Roman Catholic rights would be protected in a partitioned Palestine. On 16 June, a week after issuing the CNEWA statement, McMahon received a cable from Issa Nakleh, the New York representative of the Arab Higher Committee for Palestine, who assured him that the Committee “gave all assurances and guarantees the rights of Christians and access to the Holy Places.”¹³⁸ On 1 July this was followed by a personal visit from Nakleh, a Palestinian Christian and virulent anti-Zionist, where he again assured McMahon that the Arab Higher Committee was committed to protecting Christian rights in the territory.¹³⁹ Nakleh suggested, moreover, that Arabs and Catholics shared a common cause and a common foe in the territory, and that the Roman Catholic Church should “more openly come out against the

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 75-76. The Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem is the title possessed by the Latin Rite Roman Catholic Archbishop of Jerusalem, who possesses jurisdiction over all Roman Catholics in Israel. Barlassina held the post from 1920 to 1947.

¹³⁷ *Ibid*, 76.

¹³⁸ Issa Nakhleh to Thomas McMahon, 16 June 1947, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 1, File 8.

¹³⁹ Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 2 July 1947, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 1, File 8.

Jews and proclaim itself for the Arabs.”¹⁴⁰ McMahon, of course, offered no such assurances, emphasizing the purely apolitical nature of papal demands in the territory.

In the autumn of 1947, McMahon received similar sentiments from Rabbi Gold of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and Rabbi Lander who, in a visit to CNEWA offices, pledged unconditional Jewish support for Christian rights in a partitioned state, while confiding that “in a Jewish state”, Roman Catholics could expect “far greater security than they could ever expect from the Arabs.”¹⁴¹ McMahon’s guests, however, expressed the “impression that Catholics [in the United States] were opposed to the creation of a Jewish state”, and asked if “the powerful Catholic Church in America could help the cause in an unofficial way by letting leaders, especially in government, know her sympathy with the majority report.”¹⁴² McMahon challenged the Rabbis to provide evidence of official Catholic reticence to the creation of a Jewish state, a response that spoke volumes on the position of the Church on Jewish statehood. In November, McMahon lauded American Catholic efforts to secure an internationalized zone for Jerusalem, reporting to Spellman that CNEWA efforts had “forced both Arab and Jewish leaders to approach us, and it has influenced [UNSCOP] in making its report.”¹⁴³

Evidence does suggest that Roman Catholic pressure through 1947 was a factor in securing a *corpus separatum* for Jerusalem in the 1947 partition plan. American officials, on their part, seemed particularly reticent to raise the ire of the Christian churches. State

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 10 October 1947, A-CNEWA, Box 1, File 8.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 8 November 1947, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 1, File 8.

Department officials Gordon Merriam (head of the Near East desk) and Fraser Wilkins (head of the Palestine desk) opposed entreaties to limit the internationalization of Jerusalem to the 'Old City', in the belief that many sites sacred to Christians fell outside this area. This led them to conclude that "the majority of Christian establishments would fall within the area of either Jewish or Arab states. Considerable Christian opposition to such a move could be expected."¹⁴⁴ Jewish Agency officials, moreover, revealed the efficacy of Roman Catholic pressure at the UN. Eliahu Elath, Israel's first ambassador to Washington and a leading participant in the discussions surrounding adoption of the partition plan, reflected on the influence of the Roman Catholic lobby at Lake Success.

The Christian states were clearly determined to prevent the Jews or the Moslems from establishing their sovereignty over the city and to avoid this by according a special status to Jerusalem under the auspices of the UN...Definition of the function of the Governor made it almost inevitable that a citizen of a *Christian* state would be appointed to this office, and this would afford him considerable leverage to turn Jerusalem into an independent political entity.¹⁴⁵

Moshe Sharett, then head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, elaborated further on the specific influence of the Vatican and the Roman Catholic lobby in securing a *corpus separatum*.

It became evident that the requisite majority for the Partition Plan could not be mustered if the internationalization of the Holy City was omitted from it... The Vatican regarded the latter measure as [one which would]...vest the Catholic Church with predominant influence...[thus] warranting acquiescence in the elevation of the Jewish people to the level of sovereign statehood.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ *Foreign Relations of the United States* (Hereafter FRUS), 1947, 1143.

¹⁴⁵ Shlomo Slonim, *Jerusalem in America's Foreign Policy, 1947-1997* (The Hague, 1998): 15.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

That the internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs was ensconced by UNSCOP's final resolution of 19 November 1947, then, could only be considered a victory for the Vatican and for international Roman Catholic interests. While acquiescing to the partition plan, the Church had at least appeared to have preserved a base for continued influence in the region, free from the interference of a sovereign power. By the resolution, the city of Jerusalem was indeed established as a *corpus separatum* under an international regime to be administered by the UN. The area was to encompass Jerusalem and its surrounding hinterland, including southern Bethlehem and Nazareth, other regions of spiritual and historical importance to the Roman Catholic Church. Other provisions, such as freedoms guaranteed to charitable and educational institutions, and pledges not to tax or deny access to any churches or houses of worship, also appeared to appease Roman Catholic concerns.¹⁴⁷ The representations of American Catholic agencies at the UN on the Palestine question were crucial to securing these ends. Indeed, the advocacy of the NCWC's 'UN Office' and the CNEWA represented the leading edge of the Roman Catholic lobby on the shape of postwar Palestine. These concessions won, however, were about to be challenged by the newly formed state of Israel, and the American Catholic 'lobby' was about to encounter some of its stiffest challenges.

¹⁴⁷ For a copy of the UNSCOP resolution on Jerusalem, which had been forwarded to the NCWC's Press Department, see enclosure to Eleanor Waters to William Fanning [New York], 25 November 1947, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44, 1-4.

Chapter 4

Chimerical Triumph: The International Catholic Orbit and the *Corpus Separatum*

Though the Vatican and American Catholics considered the 1947 UN partition plan a victory, insofar as it preserved Jerusalem as an international *corpus separatum*, the outbreak of violence immediately following its ratification confirmed the fears long held in Catholic circles: namely that Israel would seize through force what it could not obtain by international consensus. The instability in Palestine in early 1948, in fact, caused the Vatican to reconsider its very support for the partition plan. The nascent state of Israel, on its part, challenged the UN's internationalization of Jerusalem, favouring a modified compact for the city that would see only the protection of 'holy sites', a position buttressed by Israeli military victories. In December 1948, the increasingly intractable question was referred to a UN body, the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC), which was tasked with devising a solution to the Jerusalem question. Throughout 1949, American Catholics remained at the forefront of the Vatican's efforts to steer the PCC, and the American delegation at the UN, towards a favourable Palestine solution. The American Catholic lobby, however, was confronted with a powerful American Zionist lobby, comprised of Jews and Protestants, determined to secure a Jewish Jerusalem. That the American government, including President Truman himself, favoured a modified agreement on Jerusalem (one unsatisfactory to the Vatican) only complicated American Catholic efforts. The survival of the *corpus separatum* after the December 1949 vote on the PCC proposal, therefore, exemplified the leadership of the American Catholic Church, and its various organs, in securing an outcome long sought by the Vatican.

The *Dies Fatalis*: The Roman Catholic Church and the Birth of Israel

Despite a deep and genuine convergence on the question of communism and Soviet containment, Rome and Washington drifted apart on the question of Palestine from the winter of 1947-1948 onward. The Vatican continued to lend tentative support to the November 1947 UN partition plan on the condition that Jerusalem, which it considered the inalienable cradle of Christian faith, be protected by an international mandate, preserving a crucial and symbolic base for Roman Catholic influence in the region and beyond. The outbreak of violence almost immediately following the December ratification of the partition plan, however, tested the Vatican's tentative support, confirming fears that the plan only facilitated open competition between Jewish and Arab nationalisms, producing bloodshed and disorder. In the months that followed, tensions and outbreaks of violence between Jews and Arabs only intensified, compounded by the Jewish underground's continuing struggle against the British presence in the territory. The April 1948 capture of the Arab town of Deir Yassin by the *Irgun*, which resulted in the murder of dozens of civilians, followed by an Arab attack on a Jewish medical column just days later, resulting in the deaths of doctors, nurses and patients, epitomized the vitriolic atmosphere in the territory on the very eve of Jewish statehood.

The escalation of violence caused the Vatican to question whether the functional internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs could be achieved. The establishment

of a *corpus separatum*, and the guarantee of rights for Roman Catholic institutions and faithful had, after all, constituted the basis of Vatican support for partition. Added to this were Vatican fears that instability in the territory would lead to the spread of communism in Palestine and the wider territory. The Holy See's diminishing support for partition (in light of the worsening violence in the territory), was revealed to Taylor's office in February 1948 by Domenico Tardini, Pope Pius XII's acting Secretary of State. In a "brutally frank" discussion with Taylor's assistant, Graham Parsons, Tardini spoke of the "mistakes of the United States now replacing the mistakes of Britain [in Palestine]," suggesting that partition, as conceived in the UN plan, could produce no lasting peace in the Holy Land, producing a chaotic situation in which only Moscow could profit.¹ In linking Zionism and bolshevism, he apprised Parsons of the observations of Mgr. Tommaso Valeri, former apostolic delegate to Egypt, Palestine and Cyprus, who had "repeated twenty years ago the existence of flourishing communist cells in Tel Aviv."²

Similar sentiments were echoed later in the same month by Mgr. Gustavo Testa, the recently appointed apostolic delegate to Palestine and Jerusalem.³ The posting replaced the former nunciature to Egypt, Palestine, Jordan and Cyprus, creating a structure where Egypt, Palestine and Jordan received separate nuncios, reflective of the Holy See's desire to have a singular ambassador committed to the rapidly evolving

¹ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 19, 'Memorandum of Conversation', 13 February 1948.

² *Ibid.*

³ Testa was appointed on 22 February 1948, just days before his meeting with Parsons. In the interview, Parsons described his guest as "a pleasant Italian of about sixty, and "an easy conversationalist", who had travelled Palestine in 1913 by motorcycle, and "spoke admiringly of the work of the Jews, and although referring often to their fanaticism and to that of the Arabs, was essentially moderate and human without too much emphasis on the clerical viewpoint." See NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 21, 'Memorandum of Conversation,' 26 February 1948, 1-2.

situation in the Holy Land.⁴ During a lengthy conversation with Parsons in late February, Testa reiterated Tardini's apprehensions on the partition plan, expressing frustration that the American government, and leading papers such as the *New York Times*, couldn't see that "only Russia would benefit from carrying through the tragedy of partition."⁵ He continued that the full implementation of the partition plan would only lead to deepening violence, and was confounded by Washington's willingness "to oppose Russia at the Dardanelles and yet promote conditions [in Palestine] which will place her so much nearer to important objectives."⁶ "Once astride in the eastern Mediterranean", he warned, "Russia will not leave."

The conversation, in fact, hinted at a formal reversal of Vatican policy. Testa suggested reconsideration of partition by the UN General Assembly as the only viable solution, detailing to Parsons his idea of a federated state with Swiss-style cantonal governments, akin to the proposal put forward by the Colombian delegation to the UN, which was already urging the General Assembly to repeal the partition plan. Throughout the conversation, Parsons reminded Testa of the growing public support for political Zionism in the United States, summarizing for him the points contained in the January 1948 'Confidential Survey of American Opinion', and alluded to the difficulties, both domestic and international, of an American reversal on the partition plan.⁷ It was a

⁴ On the reorganization of Vatican diplomatic posts in the region, see NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, 'Organization of the Catholic Church in Palestine, Transjordan and Cyprus', 25 February 1948, 1-2.

⁵ *Ibid*, 2.

⁶ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, Graham Parsons to George Marshall [Secretary of State], 26 February 1948.

⁷ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, 'Memorandum of Conversation', 26 February 1948, 2. Though the document does not outline the contents of the survey, the context of the conversation alludes to the idea that it

reminder to the Vatican of the power of public opinion, particularly in the United States, on the question of Palestine. Parsons' conversations with these leading Vatican figures, in sum, confirmed that Washington and Rome were drifting apart on Palestine, even if the Vatican maintained a stoic public silence on the issue. In his report to George Marshall, Parsons noted the similarities of Tardini and Testa's positions, observing that "however much they represented [Testa's] personal views, they also represented the official Vatican viewpoint."⁸

The Vatican's apparent reversal of policy did not take long to register with a number of Latin American delegations at the UN, where dissatisfaction with the partition plan in the wider Roman Catholic firmament became quickly evident. In February 1948, the Colombian delegation, as noted, officially submitted a motion to reconsider the partition plan, on the grounds that subsequent strife had proven its futility. On 27 February, a day after meeting with Testa, Parsons received Mauricio Nabuco, the Brazilian ambassador to the Holy See, who admitted that should the Colombian resolution pass, and the partition plan were re-submitted to a vote, Brazil would reverse its position and vote against partition.⁹ He continued that voting for partition in November 1947 was a "Brazilian mistake", and that Brazil had supported it in solidarity with the United States, that "the real act of friendship was not to vote with the United States in this instance." He informed Parsons that should the partition plan be submitted

outlined American public opinion leaning increasingly in favour of partition, a position that the American government was finding increasingly difficult to oppose.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 19, 'Memorandum of Conversation', 27 February 1948.

to another vote, Brazil would carry other South American states in voting against it, providing the necessary majority. Nabuco coyly denied that the Vatican was instructing South American states on the matter, but hinted at the quasi-theological wellsprings of his position. “As a good Catholic”, he exclaimed to Parsons, “[I adhere] to the biblical prophesy that the Jews will be dispersed and not return to the land of Palestine.”¹⁰

Vatican and wider Roman Catholic scepticism of the feasibility of partition was, in fact, shared by segments of the State Department and the American delegation to the UN, including its head, Warren Austin. This led to Austin’s March resolution to reverse the US position on the partition plan, favouring instead an international trusteeship for the territory, a development applauded by Schaefer’s ‘UN Office’, as it represented a position long advocated by both the Vatican and by representative organizations of the American Catholic church.¹¹ Ultimately, Austin’s proposal did not pass, a result considered a setback in Roman Catholic circles. Complicating Austin’s motion was Truman’s growing support of Zionism in the spring of 1948. Though the president had been only recently ‘converted’ to the Zionist cause, expressing disdain for Zionist pressure tactics into the winter of 1947-1948, and while he had endorsed Austin’s February speech to the General Assembly which detailed American concerns as to the

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Segments of Arab opinion were also enamoured with Austin’s support of an international trusteeship. In a March 1948 meeting with the Egyptian and Lebanese ambassadors to the Holy See, Mohammed Taher El Emari Bey and Dr. Charles Helou, Parsons reported that his guests were “wreathed in smiles” over the American reversal, expecting that it would facilitate the creation of an Arab state in Palestine, the only acceptable outcome in Emari Bey’s opinion. He also opined that the Arabs now “had everybody on the run”, but was reminded by Parsons that it was now the responsibility of the Arab states to maintain peace in the territory in order to consolidate their advantage. See NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 19, ‘Memorandum of Conversation: United States Position on Palestine’, 20 March 1948. For a detailed analysis of the American retreat from the partition plan in the early spring of 1948, see Michael J. Cohen, *Truman and Israel* (Berkeley, 1990): 149-187.

feasibility of the partition plan, he was, by late March, convinced that the partition plan would go ahead as devised in November 1947. Recent scholarship has explored a number of factors in Truman's fairly rapid 'conversion': the influence of Jewish political and industrial advisors, the successes of American Zionist lobby groups (particularly the ACPC), the importance of courting the 'Jewish vote' in the 1948 federal elections, and Truman's own Baptist millenarianism, which envisioned the return of the Jews to Palestine.¹²

The success of the American Zionist lobby, it was known, was bolstered by a widely circulated and read press, which galvanized Jewish support for American Zionist organizations.¹³ Zionist successes impressed upon Catholic editors the need to counter this with a specifically Catholic viewpoint, particularly as it appeared that Zionist sympathies had spread among the American public and policymaking establishment, extending to Truman himself. The 'Confidential Survey of American Opinion' which Parsons had discussed with Testa only confirmed the importance of public opinion on the Palestine question. That 1948 was an election year made the issue all the more pressing, as the Catholic vote could be tied to a Palestine solution acceptable to the Vatican and American Catholics. On several occasions in 1948, Montini expressed the Vatican's

¹² See, for example, Ronald Radosh and Alice Radosh, 'Truman, Jews and Zionists', in Michael J. Devine, ed. *Harry S. Truman, the State of Israel and the Quest for Peace in the Middle East* (Kirkville, 2009): 95-118. In the same volume, see Michael J. Cohen's 'Truman's Recognition of Israel: The Domestic Factor', 119-130. On postwar Christian Zionism, see Shalom Goldman, *Zeal for Zion: Christians, Jews and the Idea of the Promised Land* (Chapel Hill, 2010); Caitlin Carenen, 'The American Christian Palestine Committee, the Holocaust, and Mainstream Protestant Zionism, 1938-1948' *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 24, 2 (Fall 2010): 273-296. On the impact of Truman's own Christian faith in his conception of a peaceable and stable world order, see Inboden, *Religion and American Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, 2008): 105-157.

¹³ Representative papers included the *American Zionist*, the *Congress Bulletin*, the *Jewish Herald*, the *Jewish News*, the *National Jewish Monthly*, the *Rubicon*, among others.

hopes that American Catholics, given their institutional strength and political organization, might exercise their power in gaining a resolution for the territory amenable to the Vatican and to the international Church.¹⁴ In January Montini also expressed, through the apostolic delegate, the hope that American Catholic press organs would raise the issue of Palestine clearly and consistently in order to shape Catholic opinion for the ongoing struggle for the territory.¹⁵

In short order, Catholic editorials in the United States began to reflect the Vatican's growing dissatisfaction with the partition plan. Though Catholic journals had issued a tentative endorsement of the partition late in 1947, subsequent violence had quashed any remaining optimism, sparking renewed calls for an international trusteeship for Palestine. *America*, one journal that had considered partition "the best of many unsatisfactory alternatives", denounced the plan from February 1948 onward, observing that the violence it had prophesied for months had indeed come to pass.¹⁶ While American Zionist groups continued to advocate for the implementation of the partition plan at all costs, including the use of American troops to secure it, *America* warned of the security risks of armed American intervention. Highlighting the State Department's own reservations on the partition plan, the journal chastised the Zionists and the UN for rushing to support a solution that was "too much wishful thinking."¹⁷ The journal also

¹⁴ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, James Dunn to Secretary of State, 29 October 1948.

¹⁵ Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll, 11 January 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 43.

¹⁶ *America*, 'Palestine Steps', 6 March 1948, 622.

¹⁷ *America*, 'Palestine Reversal', 3 April 1948, 733. The journal observed that "on their part, the Zionists have seriously discredited their own cause by over-estimating their ability to maintain themselves in Palestine and by creating, through propaganda sometimes too powerful for their own good, an idealistic picture of the probability of avoiding the employment of outside armed forces. And the people of the

flayed the Truman administration for “acting against its better judgement” and, in an ironic allusion to the American Zionist lobby, “bending to the will of a strong domestic pressure.”¹⁸

The diocesan press largely echoed *America's* stern disapproval of the partition plan, characterizing it as an un-principled and un-workable scheme, implemented mainly to pander to American Zionist demands. In the spring of 1948, Catholic papers gave wide circulation to a series of declarations by the Christian Union, a semi-official group of Christian leaders in the Middle East who denounced the partition plan in the strongest terms.¹⁹ Issuing their statements directly to national governments and to the UN (directly through Schaefer's ‘UN Office’), the Christian Union expressed “deep sorrow and strong indignation at the lamentable situation in which the Holy Land, cradle of peace, has been placed as a direct result of the erroneous policy which has been imposed on the country and which has culminated in the partition plan.”²⁰ In June, just weeks after the formal establishment of the Israeli state, the *Brooklyn Tablet* published a ‘manifesto’ issued by the Christian Union which excoriated Jewish forces for damage to Christian churches and sites, particularly in Jerusalem. Hardly a neutral statement, it proclaimed that “the largest

world can hardly be blamed for conceiving a low opinion of the capacity of the United Nations to reach sound decisions, in view of the supposedly objective and mature consideration that went into the partition decision.”

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ See, for example, the *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Christians Flay Partition Plan for Palestine’, 13 March 1948, 1; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Seizure of Holy Places Charged to Israeli Army’, 5 June 1948, 1; *Michigan Catholic*, ‘Christian Holy Places Suffer in No Man's Land of Arab-Jewish Strife’, 1 April 1948, 4.

²⁰ The Catholic representatives in the Christian Union were Rev. Albert Gori, Custos of the Holy Land, Mgr. Ephrem Haddad, vicar in Jerusalem for the Syrian patriarch of Antioch, and Mgr. Robert Jacques, representative of the Armenian patriarch in Jerusalem.

part of the shells falling on the Holy Sepulchre and on churches, convents and Christian institutions are of Jewish origin. To declare the truth and an objective fact as well: The Arabs have stated they respected the Holy Places the convents and the Red Cross institutions. In fact they have respected them up to the present time.”²¹ Diocesan papers such as the *Brooklyn Tablet*, the *Boston Pilot* and the *Michigan Catholic* continued to give wide circulation to Christian Union statements, despite the fact that the Vatican did not officially endorse the group, and regardless that Israeli officials at the UN had accurately identified the Christian Union as “a group of Arab clergymen with predominantly Arab congregations which has completely identified itself with the Arab Higher Committee.”²² The *New York Times*, which also published the Christian Union’s ‘manifesto’ of 31 May, juxtaposed the group’s claims with reports that Jewish shrines had, in fact, suffered a majority of the damage, and that “only a couple of bullet holes” had pierced the dome of the Holy Sepulchre.²³ Verity on all sides, it appeared, was secondary in the larger battle for public opinion.

These reports coincided with the emergence in May 1948 of a public Vatican stance on the question of Palestine, a development indicative of the Pope’s desire to air the Vatican’s views to the world on the very eve of Jewish statehood. The encyclical *Auspicia Quaedam*, issued on 1 May, lamented the ongoing war in the territory, and called upon Catholics worldwide to pray for an end to the conflict. While not offering

²¹ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Seizure of Holy Places Charged to Israeli Army, 5 June 1948, 1.

²² Wayne State University Archives [Hereafter WSUA], Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs [Hereafter WRL], Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Memorandum- Christian Union’, 7 June 1948.

²³ *New York Times*, ‘Christian Leaders in Jerusalem Lay Damage of Shrines to Israel, 1 June 1948, 12.

specific policy prescriptions, the document still emphasized the precedence which the Holy See accorded the situation in Palestine. The Pope followed this with an allocution, several weeks later, to the College of Cardinals in Rome, when he issued a plea to Roman Catholics worldwide. “How could the Christian world look on unconcernedly,” he exhorted, “or in fruitless indignation, as that sacred ground which everyone approached with reverence most profound to kiss it with warmest affection, was being trampled by troops of war and bombed from the air? Reduce the ‘Great Sepulchre’ of Christ to a mass of rubble? God grant that the danger of so terrible a scourge may be finally dispelled!”²⁴ The allocution, forwarded to the NCWC in June, amounted to another call to action, both to the American bishops and the diocesan press, to raise the issue of Palestine clearly and consistently.²⁵

The apprehension felt by both the Vatican and American Catholics on the expiration of the British mandate for Palestine, set for 15 May, was expressed succinctly by John J. O’Rourke, S.J., the American director of the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Jerusalem, who described that date as the “*dies fatalis*”, (the ‘fateful hour’). “What is coming next, God only knows” he intoned in a letter to the editorial board of *America* magazine.²⁶ His sentiments were reflected by Spellman just a week before the expiration of the mandate, when he asserted that “War must not bloody the soil nor desecrate the scene of the sacrifice of the Prince of Peace, for if men and nations who profess to

²⁴ NARA, RG 59, MTP, ‘Allocution of His Holiness Pius XII to the Sacred College’, 2 June 1948, 1-5.

²⁵ Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll, 15 June 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 43.

²⁶ Georgetown University Archives [Hereafter GUA], America Magazine Papers, File 18, John J. O’Rourke to John LaFarge, 9 April 1948.

believe in God defile His Holy Homeland, how can they condemn godless barbarism in others?”²⁷ The archbishop’s words, carried in an *America* article, were a clear allusion to Truman’s commitment to Jewish statehood, despite the risks, and to the Roman Catholic imperative to protect the Holy Sites of Jerusalem.

In a private meeting on 20 April with the B’nai B’rith’s Ben Epstein and Rabbi Bernard Lander, Mgr. Thomas McMahon was even more succinct. In a meeting he described to Spellman as “rather violent”, he spiritedly defended Roman Catholic claims to an internationalized zone for Jerusalem, and denied his guests’ assertions that the Vatican was “pro-Arab”, or that the Pope had “asked Catholics to play politics” in the encyclical *Auspecia Quaedam*.²⁸ On the question of Jerusalem, McMahon excoriated his guests for their suggestion that Roman Catholic rights could be negotiated in a Jewish-controlled territory. “There is nothing to talk over,” McMahon snapped. “The Jews have stolen what is not theirs. Talking things over is like taking my coat and leaving me the sleeve.”²⁹

America published a series of editorials in the late spring which reflected Vatican and American Catholic anxieties regarding the expiration of the British mandate, casting doubt on both Zionist and Arab commitments to a peaceable transfer of power.³⁰ The journal yet again emphasized that Jerusalem was “not merely a historical city”, but a

²⁷ *America*, ‘The Holy City’, 8 May 1948, 104.

²⁸ Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 20 April 1948, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 1, File 8.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ See, for example, *America*, ‘Fateful Hour for Jerusalem’, 24 April 1948, 46; *America*, ‘Blueprint for Palestine Police’, 1 May 1948, 104; *America*, ‘The Holy City’, 8 May 1948, 104; *America*, ‘For Palestine, Prayer’, 15 May 1948, 125; *America*, ‘Judgement Over Jerusalem’, 29 May 1948, 181.

centre of vital importance to global Christianity. The journal offered an endorsement of the Garreau Plan, which proposed an international police force for Jerusalem (a scheme which was coolly received by the Israeli provisional government). *America* also endorsed the proposal of the American Episcopalian Bishop Charles Gilbert, who in an April letter to the *New York Times* called for a “Truce of God” for Jerusalem, harkening the medieval notion that halted wars as they reached their most acrimonious points.³¹

The establishment of the Israeli state in May and Washington’s immediate diplomatic recognition of the fledgling state drew a predictably terse response from a wide cross-section of the American Catholic press. The *Catholic World’s* editorial for July, penned by McMahon, was particularly acerbic. McMahon criticized the “unseemly haste” with which the United States recognized Israel, abandoning political precedent and acting with “a cold-blooded disregard of ethical principle” in establishing relations with Tel Aviv before the cessation of conflict.³² He further drew parallels between American and Soviet statecraft, suggesting that Washington had abandoned its cherished neutrality in the region in hastily recognizing Israel. “What Stalin had done in Czechoslovakia we did in Palestine”, he charged. “We had blamed him for interference in the internal affairs of another nation, but when our turn came for trickery, we proved ourselves quicker and slicker than the master criminal.”³³ In concluding, McMahon intimated that the “breakneck speed” with which Tel Aviv was recognized could be traced to Truman’s

³¹ *New York Times*, ‘Neutrality for Jerusalem’, 9 April 1948, 22; *America*, ‘Fateful Hour for Jerusalem’, 24 April 1948, 46.

³² WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’. *The Catholic World*, ‘Editorial Comment- Recognition of Israel’, July 1948, 289-297.

³³ *Ibid*, 290.

courting of the Jewish vote in the November elections, and he expressed doubts that either Zionist groups or the Truman administration, both of which purported to act in the interests of humanitarian concern, would extend the same treatment to other groups. “Will they love humanity in December, after the elections, as they did in May?” he observed acidly. “We shall see.”³⁴ That it was McMahon who acted as the de facto Vatican minister to Tel Aviv in this period spoke volumes on the tensions of the Israeli-Vatican relationship. Though his words were meant to galvanize American Catholic opinion, they also hinted at a growing frustration with Truman, whose growing support for Israel created challenges for the American Catholic lobby.

Following the establishment of Israel, and the summer of bitter struggle between the new state and its Arab neighbours, who invaded almost immediately, the American Catholic press shone a bright light on the desecration of Roman Catholic property in the territory, often laying blame for these transgressions at the feet of the nascent Israeli Defence Force (IDF).³⁵ A majority of these reports were penned by Anthony Bruya, the NCWC’s Jerusalem correspondent, and were channelled to the diocesan press by the NCWC’s press office, which often relied on Bruya’s reports as a sole source from the region. The articles detailed a host of atrocities perpetrated by the IDF in and around Jerusalem, which included the destruction and looting of churches, convents and monasteries, as well as the desecration of relics, religious artworks, vestments and

³⁴ *Ibid*, 295.

³⁵ Israel was invaded almost immediately after its founding on 18 May by Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The conflict, popularly known as the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, was concluded by separate armistice agreements signed between Israel and its warring neighbours in 1949.

books.³⁶ In September, Bruya quoted from a Vatican commissioned report by Mgr. Antonio Vergani, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, who, in detailing damage to the Terra Sancta Hospice in Haifa, reported the discovery of broken crucifixes, an overturned altar, torn missals and a smashed tabernacle. In the same report, Vergani expressed shock at “acts of profanation in the chapel”, where he “surprised soldiers of both sexes dancing to the tune of the harmonium.” “We have seen mattresses in the main chapel”, he added. “Jewish soldiers must have slept there.”³⁷ Bruya’s articles were intended to refute Israeli claims that acts against Catholic properties were merely “isolated transgressions by irresponsible individuals” who had already been brought to justice.³⁸ The articles were also intended to highlight, through lurid and scandalous reportage, Jewish complicity in the ongoing delay to fully internationalize Jerusalem and its environs.³⁹

Concrete action complemented press coverage. Charges of Jewish complicity in the desecration of Catholic property and violence against Catholic religious in and around Jerusalem reached an apex late in August, when McMahon, acting as national secretary of the CNEWA, put forward a request to the UN that alleged mistreatment of Catholics

³⁶ For a sampling of Bruya’s articles on Jewish desecrations, see *Michigan Catholic*, ‘Jerusalem Today: Where Christ Walked Now Strife Strides’, 25 March 1948, 6; *Michigan Catholic*, ‘In Jittery Jerusalem: Christian Holy Places Suffer in No-Man’s Land of Arab-Jew Strife’, 1 April 1948, 3; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Desecration of Jerusalem Surveyed During Truce’, 10 July 1948, 4; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Holy Land Strife Damages Shrines’, 24 July 1948, 3; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Holy Land Ruins Seen Work of UN: Christian Churches Appear to be Main Targets’, 8 September 1948, 1; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Proof of Looting and Desecration in Haifa is Cited’, 25 September 1948, 1.

³⁷ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Proof of Looting and Desecration in Haifa is Cited’, 25 September 1948.

³⁸ Bruya’s article appeared mere weeks after the Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs, Rabbi Lawrence Fishman, ordered a formal investigation into charges that the IDF molested Catholic sites in Israel.

³⁹ See Uri Bialer, *The Cross on the Star of David The Christian World in Israel’s Foreign Policy, 1948-1967* (Bloomington, 2005): 7-10.

by Jews in Palestine, and the desecration of Catholic holy sites in the territory, be formally investigated by the world body. In a letter to Trygve Lie, Secretary General of the UN, McMahon highlighted “documented accusations” against the IDF in Jerusalem, citing Vergani’s report and the numerous articles in the Catholic and secular press as proof of Jewish violations.⁴⁰ McMahon lamented the lack of progress on the internationalization of Jerusalem since the partition plan of November 1947, and cited “authoritative sources” of apprising him of “the criminal acts of Jewish forces against twelve Roman Catholic institutions in northern Palestine.” In expressing the Vatican’s anxiety on Jewish hegemony over Jerusalem (again highlighting his role as a primary Vatican emissary to the world body), McMahon expressed the fear that “the Jews might start a continued expropriation of ecclesiastical properties which may have no small repercussions in the Christian world.”⁴¹ In concluding, he warned that sustained Jewish transgressions would not be accepted by Christian leaders. “It is our considered opinion that if these overt acts continue or are explained by ascribing them constantly to irresponsible forces,” he explained, “then the entire Christian world is justified in its apprehension over the disregard of Christian spiritual and material interests in the new born State of Israel.” The letter, carried widely in the mainstream press, drew a terse response from American Zionist groups. Eliahu Ben-Horin of the American Zionist Emergency Council (AZEC) accused McMahon of “atavistic anti-Semitism”, though he

⁴⁰ Archives of the Archdiocese of Detroit [Hereafter AAD], Bishop Edward Mooney Papers, Box 39, File 6, Thomas J. McMahon to Trygve Lie, 23 August 1948.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

pledged to emphasize the CNEWA's concerns directly the Israeli Foreign Minister, Moshe Sharett.⁴²

In the same month the Vatican, through the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, requested the assistance of the American Knights of the Holy Sepulchre to contribute funds to the repair of Catholic property damaged in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. This was another sign of Rome's cognizance of the leadership, and financial might, of the various organs of the American Church.⁴³ The Order, which included Spellman in its membership, represented a cross-section of prominent American Catholics, including academics, jurists, industrialists, publishers and politicians. The statement produced by the order, issued through New York financier Luigi Criscuolo, not only appealed to its membership to assist the Church in Palestine, but called upon American Jewish groups to shoulder a significant burden for the damage, clearly implying Jewish culpability in the molestation of Catholic sites. In appealing, in general terms, to the "friendly relations" between Catholic prelates and Jewish rabbis in the United States, it called upon Jewish groups to "cut the Gordian knot of diplomatic procedure and make a large donation out of Jewish relief funds to the to the restoration of Catholic Church properties which were destroyed." The statement, which appeared in both the secular and Catholic press, was also forwarded to the heads of a number of prominent Jewish organizations, including Henry Morgenthau, chairman of the Jewish Appeal.

⁴² Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 24 August 1948, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 1, File 8.

⁴³ WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, 'Israel and the Catholic Church', 'Demands Israelis Rebuild Catholic Churches', August 1948.

In October, Amleto Cicognani, the apostolic delegate to Washington, again urged the NCWC to do all it could, through the diocesan press and its network of organizations, such as the National Council of Catholic Men (NCCM), the NCCW and the CAIP, to promote the desire of the Vatican for a “just settlement on the Palestine conflict and for the internationalization of Jerusalem and the Holy Places.”⁴⁴ Cicognani’s letter was sent in conjunction with the 24 October release of Pius XII’s encyclical *In Multiplicibus Curis*, his second encyclical of 1948 which spoke directly to the conflict in the Holy Land. As Silvio Ferrari has observed, the encyclical marked a decisive evolution in the papal stance on the Holy Land. Firstly, it announced, publically and explicitly, the Pope’s own position on the future of the territory (in line with the policies already advocated by the CNEWA). Secondly, it signalled the expansion of Vatican demands for Jerusalem, replacing previous requests for legal guarantees for the Holy Places (as expressed privately by a number of Vatican figures), with demands for the complete internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs.⁴⁵ The encyclical also constituted an explicit call to action to the Roman Catholics of the world. “We do not believe that the Christian world could contemplate indifferently, or in sterile indignation,” it proclaimed, “the spectacle of the sacred land (which everyone approached with the deepest respect to kiss with most ardent love) trampled over again by troops and stricken by aerial

⁴⁴ Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll [Washington], 25 October 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

⁴⁵ See Ferrari, ‘The Holy See and the Postwar Palestine Issue: The Internationalization of Jerusalem and the Protection of the Holy Places’, *International Affairs* 60, 2 (Spring 1984): 267-268.

bombardments. We do not believe that it could permit the devastation of the Holy Places, the destruction of the great sepulchre of Christ.”⁴⁶

That the Vatican shared the view of the American Catholic press that Jewish elements bore the burden of guilt for damage to Catholic property in Palestine was made evident in September. Montini, in explaining to Taylor’s office why the Vatican would not recognize Israel diplomatically, offered that the decision was, in part, based on the fact that “unwarranted attacks on Catholic institutions and members of religious orders by irresponsible Jewish elements have caused a painful impression.”⁴⁷ “Arabs”, he continued, “have not attacked or molested Catholics, and have generally shown consideration and tolerance.” While he expressed that the Vatican did not hold the Israeli government responsible for ordering the attacks, he concluded that it did expect Tel Aviv to exercise greater control over the IDF and other Jewish factions.⁴⁸

In the same month, Spellman announced that McMahon, as national secretary of the CNEWA, would be leaving in November to confer with the Pope at the Vatican. McMahon would then journey on to the Holy Land, where he was to assess the state of the Roman Catholic community there, and to coordinate relief efforts for refugees with Dr. Bernard Joseph, the Military Governor of Israel. Though the trip was officially deemed an aid mission, Israeli and American officials quickly deigned its larger

⁴⁶See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/_in-multiplicibus-curis_en.html.

(Accessed 15 May 2011).

⁴⁷ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, ‘Memo of Conversation’, 17 September 1948. Montini, in offering more details on the Vatican’s non-recognition of Israel, explained that the Vatican was “almost invariably the last to recognize new governments.”

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

significance, as McMahon would, in a mission lasting nearly five months, discuss all the main issues of contention between Tel Aviv and the Vatican, acting as the Pope's envoy to the Israeli government. James McDonald, the American special advisor to the Israeli government, recalled in his memoir that although McMahon arrived as an aid envoy, he was certain that he "held wider powers as unofficial representative of the Holy See on political matters", an impression that was confirmed during McDonald's audience with Pius XII early in 1949.⁴⁹ McMahon's mission, in fact, spoke volumes on the critical role of the American Church in the Vatican's struggle for influence on Palestine.

Throughout October and November, the diocesan press continued to detail IDF transgressions, giving prominence to Bruya's steady stream of dispatches from Jerusalem.⁵⁰ In addition to Vergani's report, Catholic papers also gave wide coverage to the report of two American Franciscan priests stationed in Jerusalem, Patrick J. Coyle and Theophane Carroll, who had both served as wartime chaplains in Europe. Their statement, which was also broadcast on Palestine Radio on 22 October, highlighted Israeli attempts to downplay damage to Catholic sites, and theorized more ominously of Tel Aviv's plans to supplant Christianity in the Holy Land altogether.⁵¹ In stoking fears of Israeli plans to erase Catholicism's institutional presence on the Holy Land, it stated that "a further consideration causing anxiety to Christians in Jerusalem is that there seems

⁴⁹ See James G. McDonald, *My Mission in Israel, 1948-1951* (New York, 1951): 204-209.

⁵⁰ See, for example, the *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Jerusalem Still Under Gunfire', 9 October 1948, 2; *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Israeli Troops Looted Shrines- US Priests Say', 30 October 1948, 1; *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Foresees Bethlehem Isolated at Christmas', 30 October 1948, 4; *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Victims of Holy Land War Rising', 13 November 1948, 6; *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Further Reports of Desecrations From Holy Land', 11 December 1948, 1.

⁵¹ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Israeli Troops Looted Shrines- US Priests Say', 30 October 1948, 1.

to be an overall plan to gradually replace Christian institutions. Of various Catholic schools in the Jewish section of Jerusalem, four have been filled so far, one way or another, with Jews. At the time of this report, Jewish authorities are ready to move into the Terra Sancta College to make it a part of the Hebrew University.” In underscoring the validity of Catholic reportage on Jerusalem, and the emptiness of Tel Aviv’s claims to be acting to curtail it, it continued that “The desecrations that have happened, [the Israeli government] wants to minimize, especially in the press. The well-founded suspicions of Christians must remain: that these acts reveal only too well the mentality of a section of the Jewish people.”⁵² As in Vergani’s report, it also detailed Jewish expropriations of Catholic properties, the harassment of Catholics by the IDF and other Jewish groups, and specific vandalizations of Christian relics, including a crucifix in the Benedictine Church of the Dormition, which had been shorn of its arms as well as its head. Undoubtedly, such details were intended to shock and to galvanize American Catholic support for the internationalization of Jerusalem.

In November, the American Catholic press gave wide circulation to the public appeal of British Archbishop Arthur Hughes, the apostolic inter-nuncio to Egypt, who charged that continued delays to the internationalization of Jerusalem, and the prolongation of the growing refugee crisis in the region, were the result of “deliberate Jewish efforts to decimate the Arabs and destroy Christianity in Palestine.”⁵³ Hughes declared himself “appalled by the callousness with which the world accepts the intention

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ ‘Memo- Statement of Archbishop Arthur Hughes- Apostolic Nuncio to Egypt’, 17 November 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

to expose to death and hardships the Arab refugees, in order to make room for 600,000 Jews.” In citing the “particular hatred” that Jews had demonstrated against Catholic institutions, he urged Catholics worldwide to support relief efforts for Palestinian Christians, and to urge their governments to press for an imminent cessation to the violence. This was followed by the wide press circulation, in December, of a petition sent by the leaders of Iraq’s Catholic community to Spellman, which decried the “ravages caused by the war in Palestine on the part of a pitiless enemy devoid of respect for the Holy Places or for religious and charitable foundations.”⁵⁴ It further lamented the “flagrant injustice and barbarous treatment meted out to the Christian and Moslem Arabs of Palestine”, and it expressed “alarm at the fate in store for Christians and Moslems in danger of becoming prey of intolerant and materialist Zionism.” In closing, it urged Spellman to use his “great influence” to inform public opinion and shape Washington’s views before the entrenched establishment of “a Zionist government which will be a permanent source of discord and trouble among the peoples of the Middle East.”⁵⁵ Spellman, receptive to the concerns of Iraqi Catholics would, in short order, be taking this message directly to Truman himself.

The Catholic press also drew increasing attention to the Palestinian refugee crisis that was becoming progressively grave in the latter half of 1948. Esther Feldblum has observed that Catholic papers, from the end of the war onward, had consistently decried

⁵⁴ Francis J. Murphy to Howard Carroll [Washington] (See attached telegram, 1-4), 31 December 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44. The signatories to the telegram were George Dallal, Syrian Archbishop of Mosul, Yohanna Nissan, Chaldean Archbishop of Zakho, Stephen Katcho, Auxiliary Bishop of Babylon, Raphael Rabban, Chaldean Bishop of Amadia, and Paul Cheikho, Chaldean Bishop of Agra.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 4.

the success of American Jewish organizations in linking the postwar Jewish refugee problem to the imperative of a Jewish homeland.⁵⁶ This was highlighted by 1947 report presented by the State Department to Congress, that stated that of a total of 794,735 confirmed European refugees, only 193,332 (roughly one quarter) were Jewish.⁵⁷ According to estimates presented in the Catholic press, more than half of these refugees were Roman Catholics, yet American Catholic demands for ‘open door’ immigration policies appeared to be consistently upstaged by American Jewish groups, and their success in linking the Jewish refugee question to the need for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.⁵⁸ By the summer of 1948, the Catholic press attempted to tie the Arab Christian refugee crisis into its general critique of Israeli incursions, and to use it as another argument in favour of the immediate internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs. Fed by a steady stream of reports from Schaefer and the NCWC’s ‘UN Office’, the diocesan press gave wide coverage to the unfolding crisis.⁵⁹ True to form, the articles generally traced the spread of the refugee problem to the “revised” Jewish state, which had expanded through war to encompass a larger territory than it had been allotted in the 1947 partition plan.⁶⁰ As a result of “Jewish imperialism”, several Catholic papers noted,

⁵⁶ See Feldblum, *The American Catholic Press and a Jewish State*, 55-60.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 57.

⁵⁸ See, for example, *Sign*, 25 (January 1946), 2; *Michigan Catholic*, 10 April 1947; *The New World*, 11 July 1947, 1; *Our Sunday Visitor*, 18 April 1948, 4.

⁵⁹ See, for example, Alba Zizzamia to Howard Carroll [Washington], (and attached ‘Report on the Refugee Problem of Palestine’), 2 September 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 31; Alba Zizzamia to Howard Carroll, ‘The Palestine Question’, 2 November 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 38, File 156.

⁶⁰ See, for example, *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Palestine DP Problem Grave’, 18 September 1948, 15; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Jerusalem- Still Under Gun Fire’, 9 October 1948, 2; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Arab Refugee Plight Serious’, 6 November 1948, 3; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Victims of Holy Land War Rising’, 13 November 1948, 2.

the number of Christian refugees in the Holy Land had risen to over 100,000 by October, “the vast majority”, the papers claimed, “of whom were Roman Catholic.”⁶¹

In connection to the crisis, the CNEWA, designated by the Vatican as the official relief organization for Palestinian refugees (both Arab and Christian), established the ‘American Appeal for Holy Land Refugees’. Offertory collections at masses raised nearly one million dollars for the initiative by the fall of 1949, further proof of the financial power wielded by the American faithful. The initiative, while providing essential aid to refugees, also placed the CNEWA at the forefront of the Vatican’s efforts to press its demands on the Jewish state, which included guarantees for the survival of Catholic institutions in Israel, and the full and effective internationalization of Jerusalem. Given the growing importance of the refugee question in the Palestine equation, the initiative also ceded more clout to both Spellman and McMahon in advocating the Roman Catholic position in Washington and at the UN. *America* reminded its readers of the connection between refugee aid and the Catholic stake in the territory.

Long before governments began to assist in the present emergency, our Catholic parishes were feeding and sheltering many thousands of refugees in their parish halls, in their churchyards and their schools. The Catholic Church has been associated with all the problems of the Near East since the birth of Christ. The purposes of our Catholic personnel, native and missionary, are non-political. That Catholic missionaries remained through the fighting, that Catholic institutions continued to care for the homeless and helpless, is proof of their non-political purpose. It is proof, too, that they expect their rights to be protected and, where infringed, restored.⁶²

⁶¹ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Appeals to Americans For Holy Land Refugees’, 30 October 1948, 4.

⁶² *America*, ‘The Christian Stake in the Palestine Equation’, 26 March 1949.

“There is scarcely a religious house in Palestine that is not sheltering refugees,” it concluded. “The officials at Tel Aviv know this.”⁶³

Israeli and American Zionist Groups Respond to the Catholic Threat

Though a furor among American Catholics against IDF actions in Jerusalem might have seemed relatively inconsequential, considering Israeli successes in both establishing a state and indeed expanding it during the 1948 war, archival evidence suggests that the nascent state indeed considered negative publicity, particularly from American Catholic circles, as detrimental to Tel Aviv’s larger ambitions. This was particularly so as Israeli officials and American Zionist organizations such as the American Christian Palestine Committee (ACPC) lobbied the UN and the Truman administration for Israel’s admission to the world body in the summer of 1948.⁶⁴ Wide publicity of IDF transgressions posed a clear danger to Israel’s candidacy, raising legitimate questions on the legitimacy of its application. A continued delay in the functional internationalization of Jerusalem, moreover, prolonged Tel Aviv’s strained relationship with the Vatican, bringing international Catholic pressure to bear against the ambitions of the new state. David Ben-Gurion, Israel’s first Prime Minister, greatly

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ The ACPC, which was the most important Christian Zionist advocacy group in the United States, addressed Truman, Warren Austin (head of the American UN delegation), and secretary of state George Marshall directly in June 1948 in support of Israel’s admission to the UN. In the same month, the organization notified a range of US senators of its opposition to British support of Arab interests in Palestine, and of the use of European Recovery Program funds to support the Arab war against Israel. See WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’, Karl Baehr, Executive Secretary (ACPC) to Truman, 22 June 1948; WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’, Karl Baehr to Alexander Cadogan (UK representative to the UN), 22 June 1948; WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’, Karl Baerh to Senator H. Styles Bridges, 22 June 1948.

feared the negative impact of such publicity, and in July issued explicit instructions to Israeli officers: “It is your duty that the special force in charge of defending the Old City makes merciless use of machine guns against any Jews, and in particular Jewish soldiers, who tries to defile a Christian or Muslim Holy Place.” He further instructed local Jewish leaders in Jerusalem to send a cable to the Pope reporting that “all is well with the Christian communities, and the Holy Places have not been damaged.”⁶⁵ Despite these precautions, damages ensued, prompting the discussed plethora of reportage in the Catholic press, which an Israeli official described as “a wave of poisonous propaganda directed against us in the Catholic world, based on stories of a campaign of desecration of churches allegedly conducted by the IDF...They are inflating each incident of damage- however slight- caused by a handful of uncultured and irresponsible people.”⁶⁶ Jacob Herzog, an attaché to the Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs, deigned the significance of Catholic reportage on Jerusalem when he observed that “these incidents sowed seeds of suspicion in influential Vatican circles,” piquing “the anxieties of Vatican policymakers”, and generally creating challenges for Israeli statecraft vis-a-vis the United States, the UN and the larger Catholic world.⁶⁷

The Israeli provisional government considered the unfolding Catholic furor over fighting in Jerusalem and the wider territory sufficiently dangerous enough to dispatch a secret mission to the Holy See to discuss guarantees for Roman Catholic faithful, Catholic institutions and the Holy Sites. In late September, Herzog and Dr. Chaim

⁶⁵ Quoted in Bialer, *Cross on the Star of David*, 8.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

Wardie, a director in the Ministry of Religious Affairs, journeyed to Rome to discuss such guarantees directly with leading members of the Vatican secretariat. The mission was facilitated by James McDonald, Washington's Special Representative to Israel, Gustavo Testa, the apostolic delegate to Palestine, and Vergani, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, whose damning reports on IDF damages in the city had been so widely covered in the Catholic press. The mission represented an attempt by Israeli officials to blunt the severe criticisms launched against Tel Aviv which were clearly regarded as detrimental to the new state.⁶⁸ Herzog was under no illusion that the mission would be considered a formal diplomatic visit, but he expressed that such a meeting "[could] help materially in preventing misunderstanding in a field in which the Catholic Church takes so keen an interest."⁶⁹ While Montini himself assented to the meetings, neither he, nor Tardini or the Pope, men who were clearly the most influential figures in the Vatican, met with Herzog and Wardie. Instead, meetings were granted with Enrico Galeazzi, a close advisor to Pius XII, Mgr. Pietro Sigismondi of the Secretariat of State, and Archbishop Valerio Valeri, former apostolic nuncio to France.⁷⁰ Herzog described the mandate of the three week mission to "pay our respects to the Holy See, and to seek informal counsel on the manner in which the Catholic Church would wish Israel to define, in its legal and administrative machinery, the religious rights of the Catholic communities in its midst."⁷¹ Given the "unique place which the Holy Land occupies in the religious sentiments of

⁶⁸ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, Franklin C Gowen to Giovanni Batista Montini, 23 September 1948; NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, Antonio Vergani to Montini, 24 September 1948.

⁶⁹ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, Jacob Herzog to James McDonald, 20 August 1948.

⁷⁰ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, Jacob Herzog to Franklin C Gowen, 7 October 1948, 1-2.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 1.

mankind,” he assured Vatican representatives that “the question would be given the most careful consideration on the highest level.”⁷²

Though Pius XII was encouraged by Israeli efforts to bring forth proposals directly to the Vatican itself, a stumbling block remained the full and effective internationalization of Jerusalem, upon which the Vatican secretariat continued to insist. Just weeks after the departure of the Israeli delegates from Rome, Tardini forwarded to Taylor’s office the Pope’s detailed position on Jerusalem, which continued to insist upon full internationalization as outlined in the 1947 partition plan.⁷³ The Vatican rejected, however, proposals put forth by the UN that would give civil judicial authorities the right to decide disputes pertaining to religious tribunals, as well as rights to determine cases at issue between religious groups and the civil courts. The Vatican was further concerned by the UN proposal’s insistence that residency in Jerusalem would have to be proven for three uninterrupted years, meaning that Roman Catholics who had fled to the Holy City since the outbreak of Arab-Jewish conflict would not be granted resident status. Such a regulation would clearly have limited the Roman Catholic presence in the city, and hindered future Vatican claims for jurisdiction there. Only full and effective internationalization, the document concluded, would protect the Roman Catholic presence in Palestine. Privately, moreover, Vatican officials expressed that the purpose of the Israeli mission had been to offset the international Catholic clamour over fighting in Jerusalem, which they maintained was legitimate, and which they agreed was detrimental

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ See NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, James Dunn to Secretary of State [Washington], 12 November 1948.

to the prospect of Israeli admission to the UN.⁷⁴ Nonetheless, the Vatican agreed to study the Israeli proposals for a period of three months, despite the Pope's confidential memorandum on demands for full internationalization of Jerusalem just weeks later. Herzog and Wardie, by all indications, departed Rome in early October confident that their mission had at least begun to thaw the relationship between the Holy See and Tel Aviv, and even expressed the hope that it had laid the groundwork for the Vatican's future diplomatic recognition of Israel.⁷⁵ In alluding to the importance of blunting American Catholic criticisms of Israel, Wardie "hoped that Catholics in the United States might perhaps learn of this visit and thereby be reassured of Israel's feelings of respect and friendliness for the Holy See."⁷⁶

Wardie correctly surmised that American Catholic criticisms had the most damaging potential to Israeli objectives. American Jewish organizations and representatives of the Israeli provisional government in Washington, therefore, were anxious to quell Catholic anti-Israeli sentiment in the United States, cognizant of the threat it posed to Tel Aviv's strengthening relationship with the American government. This initiative began in the summer of 1948, with a concerted effort in the Jewish press to

⁷⁴ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, Franklin Gowen to Secretary of State [Washington], 'Secret Conversation Between the Holy See and Israel on Catholic Interests in Israel', 2 November 1948. Gowen reported to Marshall that various Vatican officials opined to him that the visit was "to offset the painful impression caused in Catholic circles by the bad treatment which several Catholic institutions and their members had suffered on various occasions at the hands of irresponsible Jewish elements in Israel and elsewhere in the Holy Land."

⁷⁵ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, Herzog to Gowen, 7 October 1948. Herzog expressed to Gowen, as he prepared to leave Rome, that there "appeared to be ground for the feeling that the contacts which have been established should be viewed as a beginning of ultimately permanent relations of good will between the Holy See and Israel." It would be another 45 years, of course, before the Holy See would recognize Israel diplomatically.

⁷⁶ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 20, Gowen to Secretary of State, 2 November 1948, 2.

emphasize Arab culpability in the destruction of Christian sites, in order to counter, as an AZEC press release described, “the propaganda from Arab and pro-Arab sources on the question of the holy places in Jerusalem, which tends to present a distorted picture of the situation.”⁷⁷ By August, a number of mainstream national papers such as the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune* and the *Boston Globe* were also increasingly emphasizing Arab transgressions in the Holy Land.

Jewish editors also rebuked Catholic journals directly for what they regarded as an ongoing campaign of misrepresentation on the fighting in Jerusalem. Philip Slomowitz, for example, editor of the influential *Detroit Jewish News*, reproached the editorial board of the *Commonweal*, stating that as a reader and a former contributor to the journal, he had been “shocked in the past few months to read some of the biased and unfair comments you have made on the Jewish position in the State of Israel.”⁷⁸ Slomowitz detailed a host of Arab damages to Christian sites, citing reports both from the Jewish and mainstream press, and raised examples of Jewish-Catholic cooperation in the territory, which included Jewish troops providing access to Christians into the Tomb of David, a practice which had been forbidden under Ottoman rule. In concluding, he maintained that there was “a mass of evidence not only to disprove the charges of Jewish abuses, but to point on the contrary that while Arabs have destroyed Jewish and Christian holy places the Israeli have protected them. Surely Christians ought to be the first to

⁷⁷ WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’, Memorandum-Desecration of the Holy Places in Palestine, 16 July 1948, 1-6. Jewish newspapers included the *American Zionist*, *Congress Bulletin*, *Detroit Jewish News*, *Jewish Herald*, and others.

⁷⁸ WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’, Philip Slomowitz to Editorial Board (*Commonweal Magazine*), 26 July 1948.

challenge libels against our people. And I am personally deeply grieved that the liberal *Commonweal* magazine should have fallen prey to the rumours instead of disproving falsehoods.” Slomowitz forwarded copies of his correspondences with Catholic journals to officials in the Israeli provisional government in Washington and New York.⁷⁹

As discussed above, Catholic editors were scarcely deterred by the disproving of American Jewry, and relentlessly highlighted Israeli misdeeds in Jerusalem throughout the summer and fall. *Commonweal*'s response to Slomowitz was indicative of the editorial resoluteness of the Catholic press. Penned by Anne Fremantle, the British-born author, essayist and noted convert to Catholicism, it defended, chapter and verse, the assertions made in the journal, and insisted that Catholic sources in the Holy Land were sound and un-biased.⁸⁰ Catholic responses also included the direct refutation of their positions in the mainstream press itself. In November, the *New York Herald Tribune* carried an article by Howard Carroll, General Secretary of the NCWC, which challenged a series in articles in the same paper by Ruth Gruber, who claimed that the situation in Palestine was “idyllic”.⁸¹ Carroll sternly took Gruber's views to task and, in quoting Vergani's report liberally, he laid out the full extent of Jewish abuses in the large circulation daily.

⁷⁹ See WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, 'Israel and the Catholic Church', Slomowitz to I.L. Kenen, 10 August 1948; WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, 'Israel and the Catholic Church', Slomowitz to Rita A. Grossman, 25 August 1948.

⁸⁰ WSUA, WRL, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, 'Israel and the Catholic Church', Anne Fremantle to Philip Slomowitz, 4 August 1948. One of the sources cited by Fremantle was the 'Christian Union', whose 'manifestos' had been quoted liberally in the Catholic press, and which was regarded as a pro-Arab lobby by many in the State Department and the Israeli government. "I do hope you print this letter on the front page of your journal," she concluded, "as it is doubtless the only way of informing your readers of the damage done by their co-religionists to a city that they also admit is holy."

⁸¹ See the *New York Herald Tribune*, 'Holy Places Touched by War, 12 November 1948, 4.

Attempts to quell American Catholic opinion extended beyond the press. Eliahu Epstein, the special representative of the Israeli government to the United States, took pains to assure the NCWC that Tel Aviv took seriously the charges against Jewish elements in and around Jerusalem, and he drew attention to formal Israeli investigations into these misdemeanours.⁸² In quoting the Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs, Rabbi I.L. Fishman (who in August had ordered a formal investigation into charges against Jewish transgressions in Jerusalem), Epstein assured the NCWC that “the suggestion that our state has or ever had any intention of expropriating Church property is wholly without foundation”, and labelled coverage of the situation in Jerusalem as “fantastic slander typical of anti-Israeli propaganda.”⁸³ Epstein, further, assured the NCWC that he would seek immediate clarification from Tel Aviv of any future charges against Israeli elements in the territory. Similar assurances were forwarded to the NCWC and the apostolic delegate, Amleto Cicognani, by AZEC, in an attempt to mitigate the negative coverage so prevalent in the Catholic press.⁸⁴ Despite these pledges, Catholic coverage remained harshly critical of alleged Israeli transgressions, spurred by the Vatican’s consistent message, issued through the apostolic delegate, to “raise the issue of Palestine clearly and consistently” in the American Catholic press.⁸⁵ The Vatican and American Catholic leaders, increasingly aware of the power of public opinion on the issue of

⁸² Eliahu Epstein to Archbishop John McNicholas, 24 August 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 31. Copies of Epstein’s correspondence were also forwarded to Howard Carroll, Burke Walsh of the NCWC ‘Press Department’, and apostolic delegate Amleto Cicognani.

⁸³ ‘Press Release- Rabbi Fishman’s Statement’, August 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 31.

⁸⁴ Eliahu Ben-Horin to Howard Carroll, 23 August 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 31.

⁸⁵ See, for example, Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll, 29 August 1948, Box 43, File 31.

Palestine, were not about to allow the disproving of American Zionists groups, or representatives of the Israeli provisional government, to derail a potentially successful campaign. Just weeks after the Israeli and AZEC assurances of accountability, in fact, the diocesan press ran a series of damning articles by Father Raimond Naveau, renewing charges of grave atrocities committed by Israeli forces in and around the Holy City.⁸⁶

Digging In: Israeli Consolidation and a Renewed American Catholic Offensive

Criticisms of Israeli transgressions in the American Catholic press were intended to underscore the need to create a genuine territorial internationalization for Jerusalem (a *corpus separatum*) as opposed to the various schemes for protecting only the Holy Places themselves, as suggested by the Israeli government. The establishment of a *corpus separatum*, as outlined in the 1947 partition plan, and the repatriation of Christian Arab refugees to Palestine, had become the clear focal points of Vatican efforts from the spring of 1948 onward, a policy that the Vatican had again communicated to Myron Taylor's office in November.⁸⁷ On these fronts, however, the Vatican was gradually losing the support of Washington. The Truman administration increasingly favoured a modified condominium for Jerusalem, under which Israel, Jordan (which controlled West Jerusalem) and the UN would share the administration of the city under a rotating chairmanship.⁸⁸ American plans would also have required a limited UN

⁸⁶ Howard Carroll to Amleto Cicognani, 19 October 1948, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 18.

⁸⁷ See NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, James Dunn to Secretary of State [Washington], 12 November 1948.

⁸⁸ On the details of Washington's evolving policy on Jerusalem in the last half of 1948, see Yossi Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem* (New York, 1987): 51-57. American policy on the city was driven primarily by concerns over the creation of a UN police force for the divided city, which was estimated to cost thirty million dollars annually, as well as fears that a constabulary consisting of American and Soviet personnel constituted a security threat to the United States, as well as a beach-head for Moscow in Palestine.

internationalization of the Holy Sites themselves, guaranteeing physical protection to the sites, and guaranteeing access evenly to Christians, Jews and Muslims.

American designs for the city were largely reflected in the September 1948 report submitted by Count Folke Bernadotte, the UN Mediator on Palestine. Bernadotte's murder in Jerusalem on 17 September by *Irgun* terrorists disguised as IDF soldiers, however, highlighted the increasing intractability of the 'Jerusalem question', and necessitated a deeper and more comprehensive consultation process to determine the fate of the ancient city. On 11 December, the UN established the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC), a body charged with mediating, *inter alia*, between the disputants in the Israeli-Arab conflict in order to reach a final settlement. The status of Jerusalem, and the question of the refugees, were the central issues in the PCC mandate. The General Assembly specifically instructed the PCC to present to its Fourth Session in the fall of 1949 "detailed proposals for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area."⁸⁹ The establishment of the PCC signalled to the Vatican another chance to shape a favourable solution on the fate of Jerusalem and its environs, despite flagging American support for full internationalization.

Throughout 1949, the Vatican remained unmoved in its insistence on full territorial internationalization for Jerusalem, the '*corpus separatum*' promised in November 1947. The October 1948 encyclical *In Multiplicibus*, in terms more stark than April's *Auspicia Quaedam*, called for a genuine territorial internationalization for the city. In a key paragraph, Pope Pius XII implored those "in high quarters, where the

⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 56.

problems of peace are discussed” to “give Jerusalem and its outskirts, where are found so many and such precious memories of the life and death of the Saviour, an international character which, in present circumstances, seems to offer a better guarantee for the protection of the sanctuaries.”⁹⁰ The pontiff further called for “international guarantees for Holy Places throughout Palestine”, and called for the repatriation of Christian refugees to the Holy Land. The Vatican maintained a cautious optimism that the UN could still secure such an outcome. As Tardini explained in March 1949, the Pope had frequently expressed approval of the UN, even though he had never been invited to submit his views, and his “attitude toward the UN has always been one of outspoken sympathy and encouragement.”⁹¹ The Vatican, however, specifically identified the internationalization of Jerusalem as a policy priority for 1949, along with the diplomatic recognition of several Arab states, objectives clearly intended to strengthen its hand on the future of Palestine.⁹²

Faith in the UN did not preclude Vatican efforts to continue discussions directly with the Israeli government. Once again, the Vatican relied on the American Church as an intermediary with Israel and Washington. The first official approach to Tel Aviv after the creation of the PCC was made by the CNEWA’s Mgr. Thomas McMahon. His mission, which lasted almost four months, was ostensibly to manage Catholic aid efforts in Egypt and Palestine, given his chairmanship of the ‘American Appeal for Holy Land

⁹⁰ See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/in-multiplcibus-curis_en.html. (Accessed 10 April 2011).

⁹¹ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, James Dunn to Secretary of State [Washington], 2 March 1949.

⁹² NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, ‘Memorandum’, 12 January 1949.

Refugees.’ McMahon’s agenda had a diplomatic assignment attached as well, however, namely to advocate for the repatriation of Christian Arab refugees, and to campaign for the territorial internationalization of Jerusalem. Though McMahon had not been designated as an official Vatican envoy, his private audiences with the Pope both at the beginning and the end of his mission suggested such a role. James McDonald, the American Special Representative to Israel, noted that though McMahon “received his orders from his immediate supervisor, Cardinal Spellman, he is in fact so close to the Vatican in his work here that in reality, if not in form, he is a Papal representative.”⁹³ Officials in the Israeli government, including Herzog, concurred with this assessment.⁹⁴

Once in Palestine, McMahon wasted little time in seeking out the power brokers on the Jerusalem question, despite an official and frenetic agenda of coordinating the distribution of CNEWA relief aid in the entire region. On the evening of 11 December 1948, McMahon had a lengthy discussion with Jacob Herzog, the Israeli Minister of Religious Affairs (who dealt with the question of Jerusalem for Tel Aviv). McMahon described the affable Herzog as “a young man, endowed with an Irish accent owing to his youth in Dublin,” and “a pleasure to speak with.”⁹⁵ On the question of the Holy City, Herzog actually suggested that McMahon’s August memo to the UN “hadn’t gone far enough” in insisting that Church property, religious education and Catholic marriages be protected. Herzog, in fact, expressed full agreement on the principle of *corpus separatum*,

⁹³ NARA, RG 59, 867N/ 1-1149, James McDonald to Secretary of State [Washington], 11 January 1949. (See also enclosure).

⁹⁴ McDonald, *My Mission in Israel*, 206.

⁹⁵ Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 10 December 1948, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 6, Folder 7.

but lamented “that he could not [speak] officially, especially since there were elections coming up here, and the matter of a constitution.”⁹⁶ Herzog further hinted at a division between the civilian and military leadership in Israel complicating the Jerusalem question. “There is a definitive division of the victorious army from the political leaders, and the former has its way,” McMahon reported to Spellman, little assured by the Herzog meeting. On the Catholic course going forward, the monsignor was unequivocal. “I think the party line in New York should be to press always for internationalization, including everything, for some of the shrines in the New City,” he opined. “Acceptance of partition is enough, but the UN will have to devise some formidable way of implementing the internationality of the Holy Places, or all is lost.”⁹⁷

Two weeks later, McMahon took the Vatican’s concerns to the Jordanians, who occupied a section of the Holy City, and who also rejected the *corpus separatum*. On the evening of 20 December, he was received at the winter home of King Abdullah in Shureh, where he chatted for nearly two hours with Abdullah and Dr. Musa Husseini, a liaison officer for the monarchy.⁹⁸ McMahon remarked that Abdullah was “very cordial and paternal,” growing “eloquent in his affirmations that Christians and Moslems are equal in his regime.” On the subject of internationalization, however, the King was reticent, “especially since his soldiers had shed their blood to defend the Holy Places.”⁹⁹ Upon the King’s departure, McMahon continued on with Husseini, who assured him that

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ Thomas McMahon to Francis Spellman, 23 December 1948, A-CNEWA, TMP, Box 6, Folder 7.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

although Abdullah didn't understand the Jerusalem question fully, he would take it up with him further. The monsignor reminded his host that Roman Catholics "had no more assurances from the Arabs than from the Jews that Christians could live [in Palestine] in peace," emphasizing that "the internationalization of Jerusalem would be proof from both sides that they respected Christian feelings." Though Husseini offered vague pledges to study the question in more depth, McMahon remained pessimistic. In his report to Spellman, he again urged a firm line on Jerusalem, and alluded to the fragility of peace in the region, which underscored the need for action. "The present 'armistice' seems to be a prelude, but let us pray otherwise. This little world is not much further ahead- in fact, it has gone back. We must be loud on rightful claims."¹⁰⁰

On 11 January 1949, McMahon held a two hour meeting with McDonald, in which he laid out the Vatican's demands for a Palestine solution. While the protection of the Holy Places was important, he insisted that the "maintenance of the status quo" (meaning the *corpus separatum* promised in 1947), was the only solution acceptable to the Vatican. Significantly, McMahon stressed the supreme importance of the repatriation of Christian Arabs to Palestine, suggesting that the establishment of Jerusalem as a *corpus separatum* would facilitate the return of displaced Christians. The Vatican had long considered the maintenance of a Roman Catholic population in Palestine as central to the legitimacy of its presence there. As such, McMahon informed McDonald that the Roman Catholic Church would prefer "that all of the [Holy Sites] be destroyed rather than the Christian population be eliminated," alluding to the importance with which the

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

Vatican considered the territory a base of influence.¹⁰¹ He further suggested a benefit to Israel in the repatriation of Christians to Palestine: namely as a buffer population between Jewish “liberals” and “excessive Rabbinical control or any tendency toward a theocracy.”¹⁰²

In February, McMahon presented similar points in a second meeting with Herzog, who could only offer his guest assurances that Israel, which was eager to negotiate a solution amenable to the Vatican, supported an international regime for the Holy Places, and not a *corpus separatum*. Herzog’s tone was decidedly less conciliatory than in early December, evidence that he was acting on instructions from Tel Aviv. Growing Israeli obstinacy on the issue could be traced to plans for Jerusalem, which had always been considered the natural capital of Israel by the founding fathers of Zionism. Clearly sensing a growing upper-hand in the struggle for Palestine, the Israeli cabinet had decided in January to terminate the military governorship of Jerusalem and replace it with a civilian government- an arrangement which would affect the application of Israel’s national civil law. Israel further declared that it would conduct municipal elections in the city in March, and made it known that it intended to hold the opening meeting of the First Knesset (Constituent Assembly) in Jerusalem on 14 February.¹⁰³ Though Tel Aviv claimed that these measures were “administrative and not annexation of Jerusalem”, the demands put forth by the Vatican through McMahon were clearly incompatible with

¹⁰¹ McDonald, *My Mission in Israel*, 206. McMahon further insisted that the repatriation of refugees be carried out on a non-sectarian basis, stating that a Vatican plea solely for Catholic refugees would imperil its standing in the Arab world.

¹⁰² Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 60-61.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

Israel's longer-term plans. The Jesuit journal *America*, which was kept apprised of McMahon's mission, observed accurately that "despite protestations by Israeli officials that the [February Knesset meeting] was held in Jerusalem purely because of Israel's historical association with the Holy City, we have little doubt that they hoped to use the location of the Constituent Assembly as a weapon to strengthen their annexation plans."¹⁰⁴

In early March, a frustrated McMahon discussed his Israeli meetings in a private audience with Pope Pius XII, where it was determined that a renewed pressure had to be applied both at the UN and in Washington. Clearly dissatisfied with his rebuff in Palestine, McMahon, upon his return to New York later in the month, penned his third open letter to UN General Secretary Trygve Lie.¹⁰⁵ In stating that Roman Catholics "most understandably could not agree" with recent Israeli statements opposing the internationalization of Jerusalem (a clear reference to his recent meetings), he emphasized that "the Christian world has complete justification in requesting international status for the Holy City." He further seethed at "certain officials" in the Israeli government that denied the repatriation of Catholic Arab refugees to their "ancestral homes." "Who shall have the right", he offered, "to say they cannot or may not?" In closing, McMahon again raised the supranational character of the Jerusalem question, and urged the PCC directly to find an amenable solution. "Jerusalem and the Holy Places engage not only the sentiments but the sacred interests of the great mass of

¹⁰⁴ See *America*, 'What Fate Jerusalem?', 26 February 1949, 558.

¹⁰⁵ AAD, Archbishop Edward Mooney Papers, Box 39, File 6, Thomas McMahon to Trygve Lie, 21 March 1949.

mankind,” he instructed. “We insist that your Conciliation Commission (PCC) be motivated by these considerations of elementary justice.”¹⁰⁶

McMahon made a second impassioned plea for Palestine during an address at his alma mater, New York’s Fordham University, on 2 April. In a speech entitled ‘Rites and Rights in the Homeland of Our Saviour’, he referred to Jerusalem as a “capital of Christianity”, clearly challenging Israel’s own designs for the city as a national capital.¹⁰⁷ While he credited Israeli sincerity in dealing with the 1948 attacks on Roman Catholic sites, he expressed dismay at the plight of displaced Arab Christians. “While I, for one,” he stated, “wish the State of Israel well, because the footsteps of returning Jews bear traces of bloody persecution, I have come back here with my eyes full of the misery of homeless human beings, and my heart even more sensitive to the rights of Christendom.” As in his UN letter, McMahon again referred to the supranational character of Jerusalem, calling it “a microcosm, the crossroads of the world and the capital of three religions, whose rights make it imperative that the land can never be exclusionist and that no solution will be lasting that will obscure these indigenous rights.” McMahon linked outstanding Roman Catholic grievances to the debate on Israeli UN membership, which had begun in April, warning Washington that American Catholics would be watching these talks closely. “During the next week the admission of the State of Israel to the UN will be discussed and voted on. During the same time, the Conciliation Commission (PCC) will be discussing the internationalization of Jerusalem and the repatriation of

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ For the text of the speech, see the *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Pleads for Arab Refugee Exiled From Palestine’, 9 April 1949, 1.

refugees. Millions of Christians in this country will be wondering and will have a right to wonder what will be the policy of our government in the face of the assertion of Christian rights.”¹⁰⁸ The speech, carried widely in the diocesan press, was a clear signal to Truman and the Democrats that American Catholics would be closely monitoring developments on Jerusalem, accepting nothing less than the *corpus separatum* promised in 1947.

McMahon’s Fordham address initiated a more vocal and public Catholic lobby on Palestine that extended through the spring and summer of 1949. Vatican demands were again laid out in the 15 April encyclical *Redemptoris Nostri*, Pope Pius XII’s third consecutive encyclical on the Palestine question, a clear sign of the priority with which the Vatican viewed the Jerusalem question. The document again called for the internationalization of the Holy City, citing the damages to ancient sites, “not a few [which have] suffered serious loss and damage owing to the upheaval of war.”¹⁰⁹ The encyclical also urged global Catholics to action. “Let [Catholics], wherever they are living, use every legitimate means to persuade rulers of nations and those whose duty it is to settle this important question.” It instructed religious to “encourage the faithful committed to your charge to be ever more concerned about the conditions in Palestine and have them make their lawful requests known, positively and unequivocally.”

The Vatican took pains to assure that the American Church would lead the charge for Jerusalem. Shortly following the release of the encyclical, Montini issued a direct appeal, though the apostolic delegation in Washington, imploring the American bishops

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/redemptoris-nostri-cruciatu_en.html. (Accessed 12 April 2011).

to advocate heartily for the internationalization of Jerusalem. The letter, forwarded by Cicognani to the entire American episcopate, underscored “the indispensable and urgent necessity to make known among Catholics and the general public, in a truly effective manner, the desire and the will of the Catholic Church to defend and protect the sacred and century-old rights which She has had in Palestine.”¹¹⁰ The letter urged specific political advocacy by the American Church, stating that the question “be made known and emphatically stressed with the public authorities who are taking part in the negotiations to determine the permanent status of the Holy City of Jerusalem and the surrounding sacred shrines.” It exhorted bishops to encourage their faithful to “make their voices heard by the responsible government authorities” and to further “do whatever may be in your power...to create a strong movement of your faithful and to undertake the necessary steps with the civil authorities for the purpose of obtaining the desired goal.”¹¹¹ It was an appeal of uncommon directness, speaking both to the immediacy with which the Vatican regarded the issue, and to the credence it placed in the potential political clout of the American Church.

On 27 April a pastoral letter, composed by the most influential figures in the American episcopate, was issued after the spring meeting of the NCWC in Washington. Signatories included Spellman, Mooney, Stritch, McNicholas and Richard Cushing, Archbishop of Boston. Titled ‘The Internationalization of Jerusalem and its Environs’, the letter, carried widely by the Catholic and mainstream press, and read from thousands

¹¹⁰ Amleto Cicognani to the Most Reverend Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, 18 May 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 197, File 55.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

of pulpits nationwide, characterized the urgency with which the American bishops regarded the future of Jerusalem.¹¹² The statement mirrored the demands made in the papal encyclical (in demanding full territorial internationalization), and emphasized that American Catholics “had the right to expect that these sentiments, firmly rooted in the decisions of the United Nations, will now be respected by those whom we should all appeal for their continuous affirmation.” Like McMahon’s address, it sought to politicize the Jerusalem issue among American Catholics, in “[exhorting] our people to use their democratic privileges in this free nation to obtain from these in our government and in the United Nations continued assurances that the original commitments as to Christian rights in Palestine will be carried out.”¹¹³

While McMahon and the American bishops sought to raise the issue of Palestine at the UN and among the American Catholic public, Spellman communicated Catholic concerns directly with the White House. In correspondence with Truman that extended throughout the spring and summer of 1949, Spellman apprised the President of the urgency with which American Catholics viewed the Palestine question, and specifically the fate of Jerusalem. In doing so, Spellman also commuted the Vatican’s own policy demands to the Oval Office. The care with which Truman responded to Spellman, and the breadth of his letters suggests the extent to which he sought to assuage American Catholic concerns.

¹¹² See Raphael H. Huber, *Our Bishops Speak: National Pastorals and Annual Statements of the Hierarchy of the United States, 1919-1951* (Milwaukee, 1952): 364-365. The other signatories were Francis Keough, Archbishop of Baltimore, Robert Lucey, Archbishop of San Antonio, Patrick O’ Boyle, Archbishop of Washington, John Gannon, Bishop of Erie, John Noll, Bishop of Fort Wayne, Karl Alter, Bishop of Toledo, and Michael Ready, Bishop of Columbus.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

Spellman initiated the correspondence on 29 April, when he expressed concerns that the PCC appeared to be favouring a watered-down solution for Jerusalem, which would guarantee universal access to the Holy Sites, but would cede political jurisdiction of the city to the Israelis and the Jordanians.¹¹⁴ He reminded Truman that neither was this acceptable to the Vatican, nor was it the original UN scheme of November 1947, “advanced by the friends of Israel to fend off opposition to obtain the support and the votes of the Christian nations for partition in the General Assembly of 1947.” Spellman also expressed frustration that the Israeli provisional government did not support the repatriation of Catholic Arab refugees to Palestine (another of the Vatican’s key concerns.) In closing, he urged Truman to take a stronger tack against the “fait accompli policies of Israel, which disregards United Nations decrees”, and to honour the “Christian stake” in the Palestine question.¹¹⁵

Truman’s response, which was reiterated in various forms throughout the summer, did not fill the Archbishop of New York with tremendous optimism. He assured Spellman that he considered the repatriation of Arab refugees “essential to a lasting peace in Palestine.”¹¹⁶ On Jerusalem and its environs, however, the President appeared to favour a modified compact, “whereby Israel and Transjordan could accept a large share of governmental responsibility in the Jerusalem area under the overall supervision of some representation of the United Nations.” Though Truman assured Spellman that he didn’t consider the solution optimal, he did regard it as practicable, taking into account the

¹¹⁴ Francis Spellman to Harry S. Truman, 29 April 1949, NARA, RG 59, N. O1/ 5-449.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ Harry S. Truman to Francis Spellman, 19 May 1949, NARA, RG 59, N. 404/6-1449.

realities in the territory. He reminded Spellman, however, that “the United States government has not reached a final decision on the question, and its attitude...will be determined by the proposals to be made by the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC), upon which the responsibility for this task has been placed by the General Assembly.”¹¹⁷

This was cold comfort to Spellman, as the 19 April release of the PCC ‘Progress Report’ to the UN strongly suggested a diluted international regime for Jerusalem, one acceptable to both Israel and Jordan, in place of the full *corpus separatum* sought by the Vatican and the American Church (and proffered by the UN in 1947 and 1948).¹¹⁸ In response, the NCWC produced an eight page memorandum titled ‘The Christian Factor in the Palestine Equation’ which sought, with legal precision, to outline the demands made by the Vatican and the American bishops on the status of Jerusalem.¹¹⁹ The memo traced the question from the Balfour declaration forward, and focused specifically on the form of internationalization ensconced by the General Assembly in November 1947 (which was a *corpus separatum*). The memo expressed concern over Israel’s “gradual annexation” of Jerusalem, asserting that “military or civil conquest does not liquidate or neutralize the previous decisions of the General Assembly,” and that “if ‘*force majeure*’ is thus recognized and legitimated, there can be little effectiveness attributed to United

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ For a copy of the report, see ‘United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine: Second Progress Report’, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44, 1-8. The report noted that Ben Gurion, while accepting without reservation an international regime for the Holy Places, could not accept the full territorial internationalization of the city. “For historical, political and religious reasons,” he is quoted, “the State of Israel could not accept the establishment of an international regime for the City of Jerusalem.”

¹¹⁹ See Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 5 May 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 53. (See also enclosure, ‘The Christian Factor in the Palestine Equation’, 1-8).

Nations activities.” It further warned that there remained a significant gulf between the form of internationalization acceptable to Israel (protection of the Holy Places only), and that insisted upon by the Vatican, despite the “chatter” in UN circles that suggested otherwise. In closing, it admonished the “mitigated internationalization” favoured by Tel Aviv, suggesting that diplomatic tact and malleability could only achieve so much, and urged a firmer hand on Israel. “The necessity of good will is unquestionable,” it concluded, “but something else is also necessary. Clear understandings make good friends.”¹²⁰ The memo was clearly intended as a short handbook for legislators and UN delegates on the question. On 5 May, Schaefer forwarded translations to Latin American, Arab and “various other delegates” at the UN. The following day, copies were also distributed widely among members of the American, Canadian and Australian delegations, as well as to a number of American legislators.¹²¹

Though the Vatican had long valued the role of the American diocesan press in shaping Catholic opinion, it made pointed appeals to Catholic editors in the spring of 1949 to highlight papal and wider Roman Catholic demands for the Holy Land. Requests for intensified Catholic coverage were often issued through the apostolic delegation to the NCWC News Service.¹²² Though the Vatican also began to forward reports of damage to Roman Catholic shrines to the NCWC News Service “to offset the false statements made in recent months by the representatives of Israel,” the apostolic delegate urged the

¹²⁰ *Ibid*, 8.

¹²¹ See James H. Griffiths to Paul F. Tanner, 6 May 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 23. Neither Schafer nor Griffiths disclosed lists of delegates or legislators to whom copies were sent.

¹²² See, for example, Antonio Samore to Howard Carroll, 15 January 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 22, File 44; Antonio Samore to Paul Tanner, 28 January 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 22, File 44.

diocesan papers “not to mention the Holy See as a source”, cognizant of the challenges this might create for dialogue with Tel Aviv.¹²³ Diocesan papers, hardly needing the prodding of Rome, gave unprecedentedly wide coverage to a number of issues salient to the Vatican and the wider Church. Brother Anthony Bruya, who remained as the NCWC’s correspondent in the territory, penned a long series of articles that amplified familiar themes: the desperate plight of displaced Arab refugees, Arab-Christian strife at the hand of the IDF and other Jewish elements, Catholic aid in the refugee camps, and continued Jewish agitations against Christian rights in Palestine.¹²⁴ To this was added a list of Roman Catholicism’s primary demands for the territory: namely an internationalized Jerusalem and the repatriation of Arab refugees. The emphasis of these themes was not limited to the diocesan press. Catholic journals such as the Jesuit weekly *America*, the Paulist weekly *Catholic World*, the independent lay *Commonweal* and *Sign*, among others, echoed these demands, producing a largely unitary and coherent public voice on these questions.¹²⁵ On several occasions the Vatican also requested that American Catholic journals reprint relevant articles from official papal organs such as the *L’Osservatore Romano* and the *Civiltà Cattolica*, in order both to harmonize demands put

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ See, for example, *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Holy Land Relief Problem Studied’, 8 January 1949; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Tells of Plight of Arab Refugees’, 5 February 1949; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Describes How Mass was Barred at Mount Zion’, 14 May 1949; *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Sees Whittling Down of Pledges on Holy Places’, 13 August 1949.

¹²⁵ See, for example, *America*, ‘Honor in Israel’, 26 March 1949, 677; *America*, ‘Christian Rights in Jerusalem’, 30 April 1949, 151; *America*, ‘No Peace in Palestine’, 18 June 1949, 350.

forth by Catholics, and to clearly inform American Catholic laity of the Vatican's desires.¹²⁶

So anxious was the Vatican to cultivate this chorus that it monitored the American Catholic press closely, calling attention to articles that did not accord with papal views on Palestine. The Vatican secretariat was anxious to avoid a repeat of Bishop Rummel incident, where the New Orleans prelate was rebuked for views on Palestine that did not accord with those of Rome. In May, for example, Cicognani wrote the NCWC News Service, calling attention to a March article which quoted a British Labour MP, Dr. Samuel Segal, who had cast doubt on the feasibility on internationalizing Jerusalem. Cicognani continued that Tardini himself had "expressed wonderment at the fact that the NCWC News Service had given prominence to such remarks", and the apostolic delegate implored Frank Hall, director of the service, to prevent such articles from appearing again.¹²⁷ In his response, Hall explained that the piece had appeared in the diocesan press "before the intensive Catholic campaign for internationalization had started", but assured that the NCWC would "be alert to prevent a recurrence."¹²⁸

Intensified American Catholic critiques of Israeli policies and actions drew a terse response from American Zionist groups and from the Jewish press, a situation the NCWC appeared to have anticipated. In January, the NCWC News Service produced a series of form letters, to be used by editors of the Catholic diocesan weeklies, to refute the

¹²⁶ See, for example, Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll, 17 July 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44. In this letter, Cicognani requested that Carroll reprint a lengthy piece on Palestine by the Reverend A. Messineo, S.J., that had appeared in *Civiltà Cattolica* the previous week.

¹²⁷ Amleto Cicognani to Paul Tanner, 20 May 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

¹²⁸ Frank Hall to Amleto Cicognani, 23 May 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 18, File 44.

potential criticisms that might be levelled against the Catholic press over its coverage of events in Israel and the wider region.¹²⁹ In response to what was becoming “a considerable number of communications and visits from Israeli, Zionist, and Jewish agencies, organizations and individuals expressing much concern over [NCWC] dispatches from the Holy Land,” the letters were intended to present a unitary American Catholic response to inevitable Jewish critiques.¹³⁰

Despite this preparedness, Jewish critiques were indeed forthcoming, as Zionist agencies continued to grasp the potential dangers of an ongoing American Catholic propaganda campaign against Israel. In a February memorandum, the AZEC encouraged its members to counter negative Catholic reporting whenever possible, observing that reports in the press “had an unfavourable effect on Jewish-Catholic relations in the United States and the world over. If left unchecked, this development could have the most undesirable results both for the State of Israel and for Jewish communities in many lands.”¹³¹ Leading Jewish American commentators surmised the fairly direct links between Vatican policy on Palestine and American Catholic activism. Eliahu Ben-Horin,

¹²⁹ Howard Carroll to Editors, ‘Memorandum- Editorial Information’, 7 January 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 22, File 44, 1-7.

¹³⁰ The NCWC News Service provided editors of diocesan papers three form letters with which to respond to critiques from Jewish editors and Zionist figures. The first amounted to a defence of the reportage of Anthony Bruya, “an American religious with a remarkably fine record,” as the letter described him. The NCWC letter vouched for the veracity of his reporting from the Holy Land, pointing up the fact that the Catholic press had given fair coverage to Tel Aviv’s attempts to rectify the situation. The form letter concluded that “If this reply seems strong, I call to your attention the fact that the accusations against this Service were palpably irresponsible.” The next two letters provided more general refutations of charges that the Catholic press unfairly criticized Israeli transgressions. See *Ibid* above.

¹³¹ WSUA, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’, Abe Tuvim to Chairmen of the Local Emergency Committees, 17 February 1949. See also attached memo, ‘Jewish-Catholic Relations in and Over Israel’, 1-3.

journalist and advisor to the AZEC on Middle Eastern affairs, observed in July that “the Catholic propaganda machine is at the moment engaged in a campaign directed against Israel. The campaign derives its inspiration from the Vatican, and its main slogan is the internationalization of Jerusalem.”¹³² J.L. Teller, director of the Office of Information for the American Jewish Congress, observed that his “familiarity with the religio-imperialist designs of the Vatican in the Middle East” had apprised him of the wider Roman Catholic campaign to undermine Israel.¹³³ This extended to the American Catholic press, where he deemed that a “Catholic campaign of intimidation has gone to the length of attempting to intimidate American Jews into siding with the Vatican against Israel.”¹³⁴ Criticisms of Catholic press coverage, in fact, extended to the Israeli government itself, when Foreign Minister Moshe Sharett condemned what he called “the growing propaganda with regard to the holy places” and urged that “His Holiness, the Pope, whose prayers for peace in this country found an echo in the hearts of all of us, will deem it good to examine the facts and inform everyone concerned of the truth in order that religious matters and the question of holy places should not serve as a source of libellous propaganda against us.”¹³⁵

Throughout the spring and summer, Jewish papers such as *American Hebrew*, *Congress Bulletin*, *Congress Weekly*, *Detroit Jewish News*, *National Jewish Monthly*,

¹³² WSUA, Philip Slomowitz Papers, File 65, ‘Israel and the Catholic Church’, ‘Israel and the Catholic Empire’, *Congress Weekly*, 5-8.

¹³³ *The Churchman*, ‘Campaign Against Israel: Behind the Vatican’s Plan to Internationalize’, 1 October 1949, 9. Ironically, Teller’s column was published in the Evangelical *Churchman*, a journal which backed larger American Protestant support for Israel and for a Jewish Jerusalem.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ *New York Times*, ‘Israel, Attacking U.S. Stand, Bars Yielding of Territory’, 15 June 1949.

Reconstructionist, *The Rubicon*, and others consistently defended Israel's right to Jerusalem, and its right to regulate the entry of dispossessed Arab refugees, articles clearly refuting the Vatican and American Catholicism's own claims for the territory.¹³⁶ In August, an *American Hebrew* editorial identified a clear hardening in American Catholic attitudes towards Israel in May, just weeks after the Vatican had asked American bishops to intensify their campaign for Jerusalem and the refugees.

A further worsening of the crisis occurred during the second half of May, when distinguished Catholic prelates and numerous Catholic periodicals began to direct particular vigorous criticism at Israel. Prior to that time, it was understood that the Catholic Church was interested in securing certain Catholic interests in the Holy Land, especially in the Jerusalem area. Negotiations with the Israeli government regarding these interests were proceeding apace, and there was good ground to believe that an agreement would be reached. In the course of May, Catholic spokesmen appeared to have changed their attitude: they were no longer negotiating for limited objectives, they indulged in attacks upon Israel which were immoderate, and [they] seemed permeated with a feeling of hostility to the very existence of the new State.¹³⁷

The editorial rhetorically asked why it appeared that leading figures in Washington, including Acheson and Truman himself, appeared to be gradually aligning with Rome on the Palestine question, suggesting a Vatican-Washington axis at play. "Is it the newly strengthened opposition of Catholic circles to Israel that provides an explanation," it concluded, "or has the Catholic Church itself been persuaded by the old

¹³⁶ See, for example, *Congress Bulletin*, 'The British Catholic Press and Anti-Zionism', 15 April 1949, 11; *Reconstructionist*, 'The Problem of the Holy Places', 13 May 1949; *The Rubicon*, 'Catholic Charity and the Jews', June 1949; *Congress Weekly*, 'Israel and the Catholic Empire', 25 July 1949; *American Hebrew*, 'Rome and Jerusalem: Vatican's Stand on Israel has been Unfriendly', 5 August 1949; *National Jewish Monthly*, 'The Church and Palestine in 1917', December 1949, 112-117.

¹³⁷ 'Memo- Excerpt from article appearing in the August 1949 issue of the *American Zionist*', NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 153, File 10, 9 November 1949.

opponents of Israel in Washington and London to join the opposition?”¹³⁸ No such axis existed, of course, and the Truman administration, in fact, lent increasing support to Tel Aviv’s ambitions, but such reportage was successful in fomenting sympathy and political support from American Jewry.

The Jewish press buttressed the strident and largely successful American Zionist lobby, where groups such as the AZEC, the AJC and the Zionist Organization of America (ZOA), along with Truman’s strong personal relations with a clutch of leading Jewish industrialists and political figures, were able to steer Washington’s ‘Israel policy’ in directions amenable to Tel Aviv’s interests.¹³⁹ Added to this was the support and lobbying of the ACPC, the largely Protestant proponent of Israel which had played, as recent scholarship contends, a significant role in Washington’s recognition of Israel in 1948, and which continued to advocate for the nascent state.¹⁴⁰ The existence of a vocal Christian Zionist lobby (primarily Protestant), in addition to robust Jewish Zionist advocacy, underscored the unique demands of American Catholics for Palestine, which set Catholics apart from the growing American consensus on the issue, and highlighted the link between Vatican policies and the political demands of its faithful in the United States.

¹³⁸ *ibid.*

¹³⁹ On Truman’s growing sympathy for the Zionist cause, see Devine, Michael J, ed. *Harry S. Truman, the State of Israel, and the Quest for Peace in the Middle East.* (Kirksville, 2009).

¹⁴⁰ See Carenen, ‘The American Christian Palestine Committee, the Holocaust, and Mainstream Protestant Zionism’. Though its leadership consisted chiefly of mainline Protestant authorities, it did include one prominent Catholic, Senator Robert Wagner of New York, who had helped to found the group in 1941.

In spite of the intensive and growing American Zionist lobby, or perhaps in part because of it, Catholic activism on Palestine continued to broaden throughout the summer of 1949. Catholic discontent with American and UN positions on Jerusalem and the refugee question were further piqued in June, when it became apparent that the PCC, which had relocated to Lausanne, had reached an effective stalemate, decreasing the likelihood of a settlement agreeable to the Vatican.¹⁴¹ International Catholic ire was also aroused by ongoing tensions between Jewish authorities and Catholics in Jerusalem, where ongoing disputes over the return of property to the Church served to perpetuate fragile relations.

The barring of Catholics from praying in the Cenacle (the building which purportedly contained the room in which the Last Supper was held) in April struck a particularly raw nerve. On the evening of 6 June, nearly 40,000 faithful attended a rally for the Holy Land at Boston's Fenway Park, where Archbishop Richard Cushing led a dramatic ceremony from "a majestic high altar, bedecked in white gold and decorated with palms, rhododendrons and tall white lilies." The *Brooklyn Tablet* described the spectacle in detail, which was "heightened by the rich robes of the prelates, the Monsignori, and the contrasting colours of the various religious communities."¹⁴² Referring specifically to the Cenacle incident, Cushing led an impassioned plea for the internationalization of city. "How can Christendom, how can universal Catholicism", he thundered, "fail to take a prayerful but passionate interest in the future fate of these

¹⁴¹ For a copy of the report, see 'United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine- Third Progress Report', 21 June 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44, 1-13.

¹⁴² *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Holy Land Appeal Scores Cynicism of UN Spokesmen: Archbishop Cushing Stresses Israel's Responsibility to Christendom', 11 June 1949.

sacred places? We pray that those who determine the permanent status of Jerusalem and the sacred shrines of Palestine will be conscious that they are not merely the agents of men, but they are also instruments in the hands of God.”¹⁴³ In emphasizing the spiritual, rather than political, imperatives for internationalization, Cushing delivered a barely concealed censure of Washington’s growing alignment with Israel. “Please God will they put aside the cynicism and the callous indifference to spiritual values shamelessly revealed in some recent declarations by political spokesmen of so-called ‘Christian nations’.” Cushing also invoked ancestral Roman Catholic tenets in demanding action on Palestine. “I make this plea as we seek the blessing of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob through the sacrament which Christ left us the night before he died when his disciples gathered in Jerusalem to receive his testament of love, the charter of his peace,” he intoned. “Surely the sublime events of that night have given Jerusalem an international character which no political convention should attempt to annul.” At the conclusion of Cushing’s stirring address, the lights of the park were turned off, and there appeared on the playing surface “a great crucifix and a heart-shaped rosary chain which spread over most of the field.” The men who formed this human rosary carried torches and coloured flashlights, “illuminating the crucifix and the Our Father beads in red, the Hail Mary beads in green, and the links between in gold”, leading a solemn rendition of the Lord’s Prayer, as the mysteries were enacted on the tableaux. The Fenway rally represented only the most stirring of a number of demands from Catholic laity for an international Jerusalem. In August, the Queens County chapter of the Catholic War Veterans of America presented a petition outlining similar demands to Truman, Trygve Lie, George

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*

Marshall, the American delegation to the UN, and representatives of all of the UN member states, bringing the war veteran's unique clout to bear on the Palestine question.¹⁴⁴

The Cenacle incident also prompted another exchange of letters between Truman and Spellman, when the Archbishop again pressed the President for guarantees on Jerusalem. On 10 June, Spellman expressed disappointment that the admission of Israel into the UN, "due in no small degree to the attitude and influence of the United States delegation," was passed without a resolution on Jerusalem, to be determined "at a later date" by the PCC in Lausanne.¹⁴⁵ In imploring the President to defend "the spiritual heritage of millions and millions of American Christians," he reminded Truman that "the 'later date' and, in fact, the last date that will affect the Christians of this country and of the world is now, and the place is Lausanne." The Roman Catholic Church, Spellman continued, sought full territorial internationalization "to prevent ...the sacred scenes of Christ's life from becoming secularized, confiscated, taxed out of existence and rendered inaccessible." To the point that such concerns might be "alarmist," Spellman referred specifically to "recent, authentic reports received from Jerusalem which showed an adverse Israelistic attitude, based on alleged provisions of security, which denied Christians- several of them Americans- access to the scene of the Last Supper in the Jewish 'New City' during Holy Week...while Jews were permitted to visit the tomb of

¹⁴⁴ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Making Firm Plea for Jerusalem: Queens Catholic War Veterans Want Area Internationalized', 20 August 1949.

¹⁴⁵ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26. Francis Spellman to Harry S. Truman, 10 June 1949.

David in the same area.”¹⁴⁶ Given the precariousness of Catholic interests in Jerusalem, Spellman urged action from Truman. “The traditions and interests of millions of Christians in the United States and of the entire world, who look to Palestine also as their Holy Land, must be articulated at Lausanne by your representative, if the United States is not to be regarded by the whole Christian community as having failed them by default.”

Truman’s response, penned on 22 June, sought to assuage Spellman’s concerns by assuring the Archbishop that he “firmly believe[d] in the necessity for the international guarantee of free access and protection of the Holy Places.”¹⁴⁷ It was clear, however, that Truman’s interpretation of the evolving debate leaned decidedly towards a guarantee of access to the sacred sites themselves, and not the territorial internationalization sought by the Vatican. On this score, Truman reiterated the potential cost of policing such an international city, with a figure “in excess of thirty million dollars” estimated by “competent officials in this government.”¹⁴⁸ Truman concluded that he was in complete agreement with Spellman that “it is essential that Christians of the whole world be permitted freely to visit the Holy Places in Jerusalem, as soon as normal conditions are restored in Palestine. The United States government, through the PCC and the UN, will work for the establishment of a regime in Jerusalem which will assure this right.” Truman’s ambiguous response was more cold comfort for New York’s Archbishop, who sought more definitive guarantees of support for the *corpus separatum*.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, Harry S. Truman to Francis Spellman, 22 June 1949.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Truman's circumspection, in fact, underscored the need to raise the awareness of Catholic laity on the issue. Throughout the summer, a number of eminent American bishops rallied to the cause, bolstering their public calls for an international Jerusalem, with appeals to their faithful to make their voices heard. The Archbishop of Philadelphia, Denis Cardinal Dougherty, implored every adult Catholic in the United States to write to their political representatives on Capitol Hill and urge them to support "the points proposed by our Holy Father."¹⁴⁹ Dougherty's call was echoed by Mooney, Cushing, McNicholas, O'Boyle and a number of other bishops in dioceses nationwide. The episcopate's call for action resulted in legislators and congressmen being "flooded with letters from Catholic citizens."¹⁵⁰

The deluge of correspondence appeared to pay some dividends. On 22 June, New York congressman Franklin Roosevelt, Jr., who had recently completed a tour of Palestine, arranged a meeting between the NCWC's Mgr. James Griffiths and a group of New York congressmen "to discuss the real issues of the Palestine problem."¹⁵¹ Clearly sensing an ally in Roosevelt and the gathered legislators, Griffiths reported to the apostolic delegation his "success in supplementing Mr. Roosevelt's impressions at [our] off the record discussions this afternoon." By early July, Myron Taylor had added his name to those openly advocating for the full internationalization of Jerusalem. In a letter to Truman, he advised strenuously that the city "not be divided but placed in international

¹⁴⁹ *Catholic Standard and Times* (Philadelphia), 10 June 1949.

¹⁵⁰ Paul Tanner to Amleto Cicognani, 22 June 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

control under the United Nations.”¹⁵² Stressing the purely strategic and political advantages of such a move, and echoing the views of the French and Italian ambassadors to the Holy See, he counselled Truman that “any further segregation of populations not friendly within the sacred sections of Palestine will lead to unending strife and constant problems for the nations to wrestle with.”¹⁵³ It was clear that by the late summer of 1949, the question of Jerusalem, far from subsiding, was emerging as an increasing problematic issue, dividing American and world opinion upon defined lines.

The International ‘Catholic Orbit’ and the Palestine Question

American Catholic activism came at the head of a growing international Catholic campaign for Palestine, sparked in part by the Pope’s call to action outlined in *Redemptoris Nostri*. On 24 March, the Hague based International Union of Catholic Women (IUCW), through its New York secretariat, issued a detailed memorandum to the PCC which demanded an international Jerusalem and the repatriation of Arab refugees.¹⁵⁴ Speaking for “36 million women and girls in 65 countries and 5 continents,” the petition raised specifically female concerns on the Palestine question, connecting demands for the repatriation of the refugees to the abuse of women and children languishing in the refugee camps of Egypt and southern Palestine. On Jerusalem, IUCW demands echoed a familiar refrain: that the city was a uniquely historical crossroads of three faiths, a city in which

¹⁵² NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, Myron Taylor to Harry S. Truman, 2 July 1949.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.* Taylor also revealed his increasingly Arabist leanings to the President, when he informed the president that the “invasion and expropriation of Arab property without compensation which they have enjoyed throughout the years, or centuries perhaps, is one of the crimes of the post-war period which time cannot efface.”

¹⁵⁴ ‘Statement of the Delegates of the International Union of Catholic Women to the U.N. Conciliation Committee for Palestine’, 24 March 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 175, File 10, 1-2.

Roman Catholics held “imprescriptible rights.” The demands of Christian in the Holy Land, it concluded, “the states cannot ignore without impairing democratic principles in all civilized countries.”¹⁵⁵ In May, the Lebanese, French, Brazilian and Argentinian episcopates followed the American lead in issuing formal requests, both to their own governments and to the UN, for a Palestine settlement amenable to Roman Catholic interests.¹⁵⁶ In June, similar demands were expressed to the British government by the Catholic hierarchies of England and Wales. British Catholic demands for Palestine were echoed in the same month by the Anglican bishop in Jerusalem, Rev. Weston Henry Stewart, whose open letter to Trygve Lie and the PCC was co-signed by the Catholic auxiliary bishop of Jerusalem¹⁵⁷

In August, in an address before the Irish parliament (the Dáil), Irish Foreign Minister Sean MacBride made a “special appeal to the government of Israel” for the internationalization of Jerusalem. He invoked the history of persecution endured by both Irish and Jews, declaring that “our common suffering from persecution and certain similarities in the history of the two races create a special bond of sympathy and understanding between the Irish and the Jewish peoples.”¹⁵⁸ To MacBride, this historical parallel lent particular gravitas to Ireland’s request. “Speaking from that point of view”, he continued, “I venture to make a special appeal to the government of Israel to meet the just claims of the Christian world for an international regime guaranteeing the safety of

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 2.

¹⁵⁶ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Demand Holy Shrines be Internationalized’, 14 May 1949.

¹⁵⁷ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Internationalized Jerusalem Demanded’, 18 June 1949.

¹⁵⁸ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Cites Common Ties Between Irish, Jews’, 13 August 1949.

the Holy Places and freedom of access to them.” He later confirmed that Irish diplomats in London and Washington were pursuing this end, and assured that his plea was shared by the Irish government, which “strongly supported” demands for the “internationalization of the whole area of Jerusalem.”¹⁵⁹

In the same month, the official organ of Spanish Catholic Action, *Ecclesia*, announced that the Spanish episcopate, on an appeal directly from the Vatican, would be applying pressure on Madrid over the Holy Places. Spanish bishops also implored the American and Canadian bishops to “interpose [their] good offices with [their] own governments” so that “all of the nations of the Christian orbit could carry out the will of Rome.”¹⁶⁰ This international “Christian orbit”, conspicuously Roman Catholic in composition, had already functioned to curtail Tel Aviv’s ambitions, when Israel’s May bid for UN membership was accepted only with conditions attached by a clutch of Latin and South American states.¹⁶¹ Key among their demands was the strict Israeli adherence to the principles outlined in the 1947 partition plan, as well as the repatriation of refugees displaced by the subsequent conflict, both conditions conforming to the Vatican’s own demands. The Chilean delegation insisted that the resolution to admit Israel explicitly mention its obligations to the November 1947 resolution, and an Argentinian motion suggested that Israel and the PCC formally “take into account the views of the Holy See”

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, ‘Memorandum- Exchange of Communications Between the Catholic Bishops of Spain and the Vatican Relative to the Internationalization of the Holy Places in Palestine’, 9 August 1949.

¹⁶¹ ‘Memorandum- Debate in the Third Session of the General Assembly on the Application of Israel for Admission to the UN’, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 20, File 53, 11 August 1949, 1-19.

when deciding on the form and extent of an internationalized Jerusalem.¹⁶² Argentinian delegates, in fact, pressed Israeli representative Aubrey Eban over his assurances that the papal encyclicals would be used as a guide for Israeli policymakers, taking “careful note” of all of Eban’s pledges.¹⁶³ On the importance, and imperative, of Israel’s and the UN’s fulfillment of all of these vows, Catholic representatives were unequivocal. The Lebanese ambassador to the UN, Dr. Charles Malik, expressed Catholic sentiment succinctly. “What is at stake is not Jerusalem, not the Arabs, not the Jews,” he declared on 18 May, “but the quality of Western statesmanship itself.”¹⁶⁴

The mounting international Catholic pressure faced by Israel precipitated a concentrated effort by Tel Aviv, in the spring and summer of 1949, to establish direct diplomatic relations with the Holy See, in attempts to mitigate the effects of the Catholic ‘orbit’ ranged against it by negotiating directly with the Vatican secretariat. In early August Moshe Sharett, clearly bending to the pressure applied to Israel, forwarded Taylor’s office a range of proposals for Jerusalem.¹⁶⁵ If the Vatican was only interested in the full internationalization negotiated in 1947, it was not possible, claimed Sharett, as this would place 100,000 Jews under an ambiguous international regime, and at risk of Arab attacks. He did, however, offer some conciliatory positions: international control and supervision of the Holy Places both in Jerusalem and in the rest of the territory (including sites in Jewish-dominated ‘new Jerusalem’), and the internationalization of the

¹⁶² ‘Memorandum on the Palestine Question’, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 10, 18 May 1949.

¹⁶³ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, ‘Memorandum’, 2 August 1949.

‘Old City’, with Israel providing for its economic and political stability.¹⁶⁶ The Vatican, obviously sensing a growing upper hand in the dispute, rejected Sharett’s proposals. Tardini explained to James Dunn (American ambassador to Italy) that the Vatican “was always cautious and slow in all matters involving recognition of any newly created state,” calling the immediate exchange of ambassadors “quite premature”, but he suggested a deeper rationale in rejecting both Sharett’s proposals and the diplomatic recognition of Israel.¹⁶⁷ He stressed that the position of the Vatican remained unchanged from that revealed in the encyclicals of 1948 and 1949, which proposed full *corpus separatum*, an “international buffer” for the city “which neither Jew nor Arab could violate.” Tardini asserted that “no other solution could be considered adequate by the Holy See,” since the present status of Jerusalem teetered on the edge of a renewed Jewish-Arab war.¹⁶⁸ He suggested that as a pretext to serious negotiations, Israel would “do well to settle grave unwarranted war damages suffered by Catholic institutions in the Holy Land.”

On 12 August, Tardini forwarded to Taylor a six-page memo, ‘The Present Situation in Jerusalem’, which was a “compendium of *de facto* and *de jure* considerations which according to the Holy See were essential in the just resolution of the Palestine question.”¹⁶⁹ Its proposals, in short, dismissed any possibility of a compromise on the Vatican’s part, amounting to a loquacious restatement of long-held positions. The memo

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.* These proposals were forwarded to Taylor from Shlomo Ginossar, the Israeli ambassador to Italy.

¹⁶⁷ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, James Dunn to George Marshall [Washington], 10 March 1949.

¹⁶⁸ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 30, Franklin Gowen to George Marshall [Washington], 12 August 1949.

¹⁶⁹ NARA, RG 59, MTP, Box 26, Franklin Gowen to George Marshall [Washington], ‘Memo- The Problem of Jerusalem: The Vatican’s Latest Recommendations’, 13 August 1949. See attached Italian original, ‘Situazione presente di Gerusalemme.’

outlined factors beyond Catholic interests for the internationalization of Jerusalem. These included the notion that Jerusalem was a crucial dividing line between Arabs and Jews, and that international control for the city would greatly reduce the chances of a war sparked by either for absolute control of the city. Tardini also surmised that an internationalized Jerusalem would be more economically self-sufficient, not least because its stability would draw Catholic pilgrims from around the world, generating significant revenues.¹⁷⁰ On the question of recognizing Israel and entertaining Israeli proposals for Jerusalem, Tardini insisted on the establishment of a *corpus separatum* as a precondition to any exchange of ministers. The Vatican clearly preferred allowing Tel Aviv to twist in the wind of international Catholic pressure than to provide a direct line of communication for resolving disputes.

Though the Vatican refused to extend formal recognition to Israel, it continued to use Mgr. Thomas McMahon as an unofficial envoy in the territory. The American prelate had returned to the territory in June, after being named president of the Pontifical Mission for Palestine by Pope Pius XII, a position that placed him in charge of Catholic relief efforts in the entire region. Though the Vatican refused to confirm or deny rumours that McMahon's aid mission had a political agenda attached, his meetings with high-ranking Israeli officials suggested that he indeed functioned as a papal envoy. At any rate, the Israeli government considered him the pope's de facto representative. McMahon's August meetings with Jacob Herzog and Chain Wardie, of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, revealed a growing entrenchment of both Vatican and Israeli positions. In early

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* The document also disputed the costs of an international police force to secure the city's stability, a clear rejection of Truman's estimates on the cost of such a force.

August, Herzog asked McMahon how Israel could effectively open dialogue with the Vatican on Jerusalem and the refugees, particularly in advance of the UN debate on the PCC's resolutions, set to begin in September. Herzog also discussed with McMahon the Israeli 'reading' of the encyclicals of 1948 and 1949, claiming that he "did not read in them the UN partition plan of 1947."¹⁷¹ McMahon, again revealing the decisive American Catholic leadership on the issue, replied that "the Vatican is not a member of the UN, but the United States bishops and our own CNEWA have been demanding implementation of the 1947 plan, and have never been told by our Holy Father to do otherwise."¹⁷² Clearly sensing the upper hand in the debate, he yielded to none of the suggestions, already floated by earlier by Sharett, put forward by his Israeli hosts. "I gather that the Jews are anxious to get to the Vatican before the September troubles, and to present some compromise...all of which will naturally be in their favour," he reported back to the NCWC. "My own idea is that we should not be taken in, for it is certainly a policy of '*divide et impera*.' However it is good to know what they are up to. I already indicated that they have promised nothing, and that the most critical moment in the whole period comes in the September Assembly."

The Ostensible Triumph of the 'Catholic International': The Revival of *Corpus Separatum*

The PCC's proposals for the city, which were contained in the twenty-five article 'Jerusalem Statute', were completed by the committee on 29 August, and were forwarded to the UN to be debated in the General Assembly's Fourth Session, set to open on 20

¹⁷¹ Amleto Cicognani to Howard Carroll [Washington], 26 August 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 23.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

September. Its recommendations amounted to a compromise between proponents and opponents of a *corpus separatum* for the city, shaped by American desires to offend neither camp too severely. Though French PCC delegates were claiming that Vatican and French Catholic pressure was making it difficult to agree to anything less than full internationalization, they were eventually persuaded to adopt a middle-of-the-road approach that still appeared to fulfill the spirit and letter of the 1947 partition plan.¹⁷³ The PCC statute called for the establishment of a “permanent international zone” for Greater Jerusalem (the territory that was to be a *corpus separatum*). Though it recognized the city as one entity, it delegated civic jurisdiction to the “responsible authorities of the two zones”, essentially recognizing Israeli and Jordanian sovereignty in the city. It forbade, however, the establishment of national and governmental institutions there, a clear challenge to Israel, which had already established branches of government services in the city, including the Supreme Court. Immigration quotas were also imposed on the city, in an effort to preserve the “demographic equilibrium of the area of Jerusalem.”¹⁷⁴ On the Holy Places, the statute proposed the appointment of a neutral (neither Israeli nor Arab) commissioner, who would ensure free access to sites sacred to Christians, Jews and Muslims, and who was authorized to station guards outside of these sites.¹⁷⁵ It amounted to a hybrid scheme intended both to establish a quasi-international character for the city, reflective of the 1947 partition plan, and to recognize the reality on the ground, where the Israeli and Jordanian presence had become well entrenched.

¹⁷³ Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 69.

¹⁷⁴ ‘Palestine – Proposals for a Permanent International Regime for the Jerusalem Area’, (PCC ‘Jerusalem Statute’), NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 23, 12 September 1949, 4.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.* See also Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 70.

Though the State Department, whose guidelines constituted the essence of the PCC recommendations, believed that the statute represented “a last chance to achieve any degree of internationalization”, the plan was not well received either by the Vatican or by Israel. Advance copies of the PCC statute were forwarded to the Vatican and the American hierarchy, under strict confidence, by Schaefer’s NCWC UN Office on 10 September. Tardini immediately surmised that the PCC formula amounted to a significant watering down of previous pledges. A day after receiving the report, he requested that Schaefer’s office re-distribute the IUCW pamphlet, ‘The Rights of Christians in the Holy Land’, to delegates at the General Assembly.¹⁷⁶ In her reply to Tardini, Schaefer agreed that the pamphlet made a powerful case for the Roman Catholic position, adding that the “historical aspects of the pamphlet will be particularly valuable, since the long story of the vicissitudes of the Holy Places is proof that their control by single nations has never insured either their real freedom or protection.”¹⁷⁷

Within the week, the Vatican again turned to the assistance of the NCWC UN Office. On 16 September, Tardini forwarded Schaefer a memo outlining the Vatican’s questions and concerns on a large number of the twenty-five points in the PCC’s ‘Jerusalem Statute’.¹⁷⁸ Tardini again instructed Schaefer to distribute these Vatican

¹⁷⁶ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 12 September 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 11.

¹⁷⁷ Catherine Schaefer to Domenico Tardini [Rome], 13 September 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44.

¹⁷⁸ Domenico Tardini to Catherine Schaefer [New York], 16 September 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44. See attached memo, ‘Observations Generales’, 1-2. Tardini’s memo amounted to a restatement of the Vatican’s longstanding concerns. They included scepticism that a ‘commissioner’ for Jerusalem could guarantee a balance of the population between Arabs and Jews, scepticism that a ‘commissioner’ could impose authority on two sovereign powers, and doubts that a commissioner could guarantee universal access to the Holy Sites. Tardini also opined that the Holy Sites, also being ancient sites of world interest,

observations to the UN “to make known the mind of the Holy See on this delicate and complex problem.” He emphasized the need to target those whose views were amenable to the Vatican’s, “delegates likely to make their own contributions toward an equitable solution of the question.”¹⁷⁹ To this end, he suggested Roman Catholic delegates such as Father Anand Souza of India, Charles Malik of Lebanon, and Dr. Emil Castro of El Salvador.

Tardini’s urgency was motivated by a growing apprehension, both in Vatican and American Catholic circles, that various interests were conspiring against papal designs, and that some Roman allies in the struggle for Palestine were wavering. In early September, Tardini informed the NCWC of his concern about certain PCC members whom he suspected of harbouring hardened anti-Catholic sentiments. He specifically identified Dr. Pablo de Azcárate, principal secretary of the PCC, who he deemed “an active Red in the Spanish Civil War,” with “an anti-Catholic record.”¹⁸⁰ He requested that the NCWC UN Office keep tabs on PCC members, and to forward relevant information to Rome. Catholic apprehensions were heightened further on 16 September, when, during an off-the-record UN luncheon for press correspondents, Secretary General Trygve Lie expressed to Schaefer little hope that “the obstacles in the Jerusalem question would be overcome or bypassed by the General Assembly”, hinting at the difficulty in imposing an

could not simply be placed under the jurisdiction of foreign entities. In sum, the memo again demanded that the ‘status quo’ of 1947 be implemented.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll [Washington], 1 September 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 11.

international regime in a city already controlled by Israel and Jordan.¹⁸¹ Lie further suggested that the Arab refugee problem would likely be “settled by dollars”, suggesting monetary incentives for neighbouring Arab states taking in refugees, in lieu of resettlement in Palestine.

In the same week, Schaefer also surmised that several Latin and South American delegates were warming to the PCC’s compromise statute for Jerusalem, in addition to the American and British delegations, which were prepared to support PCC proposals “as a basis of discussion.” She reported to Carroll that the Dutch delegation, which “included several Catholic members”, and which had supported the *corpus separatum* concept since its inception, was now considering “introducing a resolution which would in effect scrap the whole idea of true and proper internationalization, leaving Jerusalem partitioned as it is now, merely providing for some sort of mixed commission” to guarantee protection of and access to the Holy Places.¹⁸² She considered the Dutch position particularly important for its effect on the positions of Belgium and Luxembourg, both majority Catholic states. As “the Benelux countries have a habit of consulting on these matters”, she stated to Carroll, she would provide him with “urgent clarification” of the Dutch position.¹⁸³

Roman Catholic efforts to shape UN developments on Palestine in the fall of 1949 were countered by a robust, vocal and international pro-Israeli lobby, which included the largest and most powerful American Zionist groups, such as the AZEC, the AJC and the

¹⁸¹ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll [Washington], 16 September 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 53, File 20. See attached ‘Confidential Memorandum’, 1-2.

¹⁸² Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll [Washington], 19 October 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44.

¹⁸³ ‘Confidential- Views of the Various Delegations and Groups Regarding the Holy Places’, 20 October 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 44, 2.

ZOA. It also included American Protestant groups such as the ACPC, which favoured Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem, and which generally supported Israeli positions vis-a-vis the Arab world and the UN. These groups largely mirrored the positions of the Israeli government itself, which had formally announced to the UN General Assembly on 27 September that it rejected the PCC's 'Jerusalem Statute'. Like the Vatican and American Catholics, pro-Israel groups also rejected the PCC's proposals for Palestine, but for the reason that the proposals demanded unjustified concessions from Tel Aviv.

The diocesan press, on its part, continued to shine a bright light on the matter, pointing up not only Israeli transgressions in the territory, but also the powerful Zionist lobby at work in the United States. Throughout September and early October, the *Brooklyn Tablet* reported on an American Zionist pressure campaign, co-ordinated "by several thousand orthodox rabbis", which resulted in a flood of telegrams, letters and cards being dispatched to Truman and to American UN delegates from synagogues and Jewish organizations.¹⁸⁴ On 15 October, the paper further reported that a "crusade" was about to be organized, calling on American Jewry to take a biblical oath, the 137th psalm ('If I Forget Thee, O Jerusalem'), whereby they would "bind themselves in relentless opposition to the internationalization of Jerusalem."¹⁸⁵ "In 1947", the paper observed wryly, "we found no Zionists calling on American Jewry or on world Jewry for a 'Biblical Oath' to repudiate the internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs. At that

¹⁸⁴ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'Freedom of Holy Land Threatened by Israeli Stand', 8 October 1949, 1.

¹⁸⁵ *Brooklyn Tablet*, 'If I Forget Thee, O Jerusalem', 15 October 1949, 4. "In 1947", the paper observed wryly, "we found no Zionists calling on American Jewry or on world Jewry for a 'Biblical Oath' to repudiate the Internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs. At that time, when the viability of a Jewish State hung in the balance, there was no mystical invocation of the phrase, 'If I Forget Thee, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget her skill, Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth...'"

time, when the viability of a Jewish state hung in the balance, there was no mystical invocation of the phrase, ‘If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, Let my right hand forget her skill, Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth...’¹⁸⁶

At the same time, the AZEC issued an appeal to Truman demanding the right of Israel to use Jerusalem as its rightful capital. *Palestine*, the AZEC’s bulletin, voiced the opinion of a majority of Jewish organizations in stating that “the Jews of Jerusalem and their political life are not the concern of religious mankind; the Holy Places and their security are”, a position which clearly refuted the Vatican’s stand.¹⁸⁷ On 3 November, the AZEC and smaller Zionist groups staged a large ‘Save Jerusalem’ rally at New York’s Manhattan Center, with leaders unanimously going on record to call for the rejection of the PCC plan for Jerusalem, and to “accord the Jews of the Holy City the right to participate in the government of Israel and share in its problems and responsibilities.”¹⁸⁸ Speakers included Republican congressman Jacob K. Javits, Democrat congressman Emanuel Celler, and prominent Zionist leaders such as Nahum Goldman and Louis Lipsky. In turn, speakers emphasized the feasibility of protecting holy sites within a Jewish Jerusalem, echoing Tel Aviv’s rationale. Passionate evocations of Israel’s historic claims to the city, however, echoing the 137th psalm, were also invoked. As Lipsky, chairman of the American Zionist Council asserted, “without Jerusalem, Israel would be deprived of its spiritual significance.”¹⁸⁹ Virtually the whole spectrum of American Jewry

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ *Palestine* Editorial (Fall 1949). Quoted in Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 74.

¹⁸⁸ *New York Times*, ‘Parley Assails U.N. Jerusalem Plan’, 3 November 1949, 9.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

was mobilized in the ‘Save Jerusalem’ campaign, as Zionist leaders, encouraged by a powerful grassroots support among the faithful, organized a focused campaign aimed at convincing the American UN delegation to “reject any plan which would sever the New City of Jerusalem from Israel.”¹⁹⁰

To this was added the support of mainline Protestant groups, such as the ACPC, represented by influential theologians such as Reinhold Niebuhr and Carl Voss. In a letter to Truman on 19 October, 101 members of the ACPC attacked the PCC proposals as “neither desirable nor practicable.” The letter specifically recognized the New City of Jerusalem (the section controlled by Israel) as “the natural capital of the State of Israel,” adding that “the realization of the universal interest in Jerusalem and the fulfillment of the national aspirations of the people of Israel are in no way incompatible.”¹⁹¹ On 3 November, the same day as the ACPC rally in New York, fifteen prominent Protestant and labour leaders forwarded a letter to General Carlos P. Romulo, president of the UN General Assembly, and Secretary General Trygve Lie, demanding an “international curatorship” for the Holy Places, with an administering commission composed of representatives from the Protestant, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Jewish and Moslem faiths, and responsible to the UN Security Council. The letter advocated strongly for a Jewish Jerusalem, echoing the demands of American Zionist groups, and was clearly intended to downplay the Vatican’s stake in the Holy City, by making a Catholic representative only one of five representatives on the commission. Among the signatories, which included no Roman Catholics, were Niebuhr, G. Bromley Oxnam,

¹⁹⁰ Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 75.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, 75.

Methodist bishop of New York, Norman B. Nash, Episcopalian bishop of Massachusetts, James Patton, president of the Farmers Educational and Cooperative Union, and Walter P. Reuther, president of the United Automobile Workers of America.¹⁹²

Various elements in the American Catholic Church were well aware of the threat that the vociferous and focused ‘Save Jerusalem’ lobby presented to the Vatican’s interests in the Holy Land. The *Brooklyn Tablet* mused openly on the potential of American Zionism’s campaign to “mislead officials of the United States and the United Nations into thinking that there was only one point of view on the future of Jerusalem.”¹⁹³ “It is possible that officials will get that impression,” it warned, “if the position of Catholics is not expressed with comparable vigour and volume.” It reminded readers that psalm 137, ‘If I Forget Thee, O Jerusalem’, was “as much a challenge to the multiple millions of Christians throughout the world as it is to Jewry and Islam” and it implored Catholics not to “forget Jerusalem, even in this latest hour of struggle between Isaac and Ishmael.”¹⁹⁴

In early November, Catherine Schaefer expressed similar, if less grandiloquent, sentiments to Howard Carroll, urging that the NCWC make the struggle for Jerusalem its highest priority until the matter was settled at the UN. In alluding to the powerful Zionist lobby active in the United States, she observed that “the present position of the United States is in favour of the PCC report, but is subject to constructive influence. You will remember that the United States position showed itself to be quite susceptible to strong

¹⁹² Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll [Washington], 3 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 26. See attached memo, ‘15 Leaders Ask Jerusalem Split Between Israel and Arab State’.

¹⁹³ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Freedom of Holy City Threatened by Israeli Stand’, 8 October 1949, 1.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

representations of public opinion on previous occasions when the Palestine question was discussed.”¹⁹⁵ Observing that the American position “would be influential, if not decisive to the outcome”, she advised Carroll that a high level representation from the American hierarchy to the American government was imperative. “A personal visit to President Truman by one of these officials,” she added, “would also help tremendously.” She also urged representations from lay Catholic organizations, in line with the Pope Pius XII’s ‘call to action’ in *Redemptoris Nostri*. She cited the recent examples of the French Women’s Catholic Action, which had submitted a petition to the Quai D’Orsay demanding internationalization, and the Catholic Women’s League of Canada, which had passed and published a resolution on the question. In closing, she emphasized to Carroll the urgency of the matter. In early November, she added, the National Council of Catholic Women of Cuba had wired the Cuban UN delegation making similar requests.¹⁹⁶ “If anything is to be done by Catholics,” she stressed, “it is imperative it be done soon. The Delegation of Israel is cultivating and consulting with members of various delegations, including those from Catholic countries, and giving the impression that its plan, which would not provide for the internationalization of Jerusalem, has the support and tacit approval of the Vatican. A clear and unequivocal statement of Catholic aims and desires in the matter is needed.”¹⁹⁷

Indeed, the NCWC wasted little time in intensifying its own campaign for as international Jerusalem. The day after receiving Schaefer’s letter, Carroll wrote to Dean

¹⁹⁵ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll [Washington], 4 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

¹⁹⁶ ‘Confidential Memorandum- Jerusalem’, 15 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Acheson, reminding the Secretary of State of the American bishop's statement of 27 April, which contended that only the creation of a genuine *corpus separatum* "could guarantee the security and preservation of the Holy City, which is venerated by the whole civilized world, and which has been contested in blood by Jews and Arabs."¹⁹⁸ The letter, which was also forwarded to Warren Austin and other key members of the American UN delegation, was clearly intended to highlight American Catholicism's continued insistence on full *corpus separatum*, and to counter impressions that the PCC's proposals were acceptable to the Vatican, as some American Zionist groups had inferred. The next week, Carroll cabled the letter directly to the White House.¹⁹⁹ On 20 November, Archbishop Timothy McNicholas of Cincinnati, Chairman of the Administrative Board of the NCWC, made his own representation to Truman, asking the President for American intervention at this crucial juncture.²⁰⁰ Stating that he spoke "for the vast majority of American citizens", he expressed hope that the United States "would remain true to its glorious traditions of deep respect for religion and decency, and exercise its powerful influence in this matter." On the lay Catholic front, the NCCM and the NCCW also sent telegrams to Truman, Acheson and Austin urging American support for true internationalization.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Howard Carroll to Dean Acheson [Washington], 5 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

¹⁹⁹ Howard Carroll to Amleto Cicognani [Washington], 21 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

²⁰⁰ Timothy McNicholas to Harry S. Truman [Washington], 20 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 197, File 55.

²⁰¹ Howard Carroll to John T. McNicholas [Cincinnati], 7 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 197, File 55.

The role that Schaefer's NCWC 'UN Office' played in the crucial weeks leading to the UN decision on the PCC's proposals deserve special mention. In early November, Schafer and her assistant, Alba Zizzamia, were asked by Carroll, on instructions directly from the Vatican, to "draft a memorandum or statement on the Catholic position on Jerusalem", which was to be used by the bishops at their upcoming annual meeting for 1949.²⁰² Domenico Tardini, in fact, suggested that Schaefer's eventual memorandum, which would be formulated from the principles gleaned from confidential Vatican memoranda on Jerusalem and the papal encyclicals, be used as a guide for UN delegates from Catholic states. Tardini was concerned that there was "a good deal of confusion among UN delegates as to the precise position of the Church on the question", a situation exacerbated by Israeli delegates who claimed that Tel Aviv's proposals were amenable to the Pope.²⁰³ To this end, Carroll forwarded Schaefer a confidential Vatican memorandum on 5 November, which outlined Pope Pius XII's continued insistence on nothing short of genuine internationalization.²⁰⁴ Schaefer and Zizzamia's familiarity with both papal positions and the PCC proposals made them ideal, in Carroll's view, to draft "an accurate statement of our position in the present stage of negotiations." Just five days later, Schaefer returned a pithy yet comprehensive statement, which she admitted both Zizzamia and herself had "torn their hair out over, separately and collectively."²⁰⁵ Schafer

²⁰² Howard Carroll to Catherine Schaefer, 8 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 26.

²⁰³ Howard Carroll to Samuel Cardinal Stritch [Chicago], 8 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

²⁰⁴ Eleanor Leahy to Catherine Schaefer, 5 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 26. See attached memorandum, 3 November 1949.

²⁰⁵ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 10 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24. See attached memo, 'Draft Statement on the Status of Jerusalem.'

also included, for the “strictly confidential information of the bishops”, a copy of the Israeli draft proposal for Jerusalem, allowing the NCWC to anticipate Tel Aviv’s position before formulating their own statement. The bishop’s annual statement for 1949, issued on 21 November, bore the indelible mark of both the Vatican’s memoranda and of Schafer and Zizzamia’s draft.²⁰⁶ The statement, carried widely in the diocesan press, was also forwarded to Truman, Austin and members of the American UN delegation.

Schaefer’s office was similarly crucial in surmising where support for the ‘Catholic position’ did and did not exist among UN delegates, and for the dissemination of a range of memoranda and position papers from the NCWC and Vatican sources to these delegates. As discussed previously, this included a monitoring of South American and European voting intentions on the PCC proposals. By mid-November, with a vote just weeks away, Schaefer deigned support from the Brazilian, Peruvian, Cuban, Lebanese and Russian delegations, along with the support of a clutch of Arab states (who supported a *corpus separatum* in part to curb Jordanian ambitions).²⁰⁷ On 15 November, however, she reported that a number of delegations, “even those sympathetic to the Catholic point of view”, were warming to the compromise solution proposed by the PCC. “Some have said they are starting on the basis of the PCC plan without much enthusiasm for it”, she reported to Carroll, “in the hope that by insisting on as much as possible, some

²⁰⁶ See Raphael M. Huber, *Our Bishops Speak*, 364-365.

²⁰⁷ ‘Confidential Memorandum- Jerusalem’, 15 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38. In a later memo, Schaefer provided some interesting insight into the rationale behind Russian support for internationalization. She surmised that to Moscow, supporting a *corpus separatum* would assist in the defeat of that very end, as the Russians felt they “merely had to support a resolution to see it defeated.” She also reasoned that Moscow hoped that its support would create insurrection in the region, allowing Russia to capitalize on the disorder and to utilize Jewish communists as political and imperial tools. See ‘Memorandum on the Status of Debate on Jerusalem’, 1 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 24, File 44.

form of satisfactory compromise can be restored.”²⁰⁸ Schafer was referring to former stalwarts Mexico, Venezuela and Chile, whose positions had modified gradually since the late summer. Their positions were likely shaped by the growing scepticism on the feasibility of a *corpus separatum*, and their desire to remain on-side with the United States, Britain and Russia on such a key vote. Axel Serup, Legal Advisor for the PCC, confirmed Schaefer’s growing apprehension during an off-the-record luncheon on 15 November, when he announced that UN priorities were focused squarely on the protection of the Holy Sites themselves, and peace between Arab and Jewish factions. The UN “had no interest”, he intoned, “in the exercise of sovereignty of civil administration.”²⁰⁹

In the midst of sagging support, and with just weeks left before a UN decision on Jerusalem, the efforts of the Vatican and the American Church reached a new pitch. On 14 November, the Vatican issued an apostolic exhortation by Pope Pius XII calling upon Catholics worldwide to pray for a just settlement for Jerusalem, “a status in accordance with the norms of true justice that will remove the dangers of war and will preserve the sacred character of those places which are venerated and loved by the followers of Jesus Christ.”²¹⁰ The following day, Cicognani urged the American bishops “to call upon your pastors, priests, religious and laity to organize and to participate in public and solemn

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

²¹⁰ ‘Text of Apostolic Exhortation by Pius XII Ordering Worldwide Prayers for the Holy Places’, 14 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24. An apostolic exhortation is a communication from the Pope to his global faithful encouraging corporate action on a certain issue or theme. It does not define Church doctrine, and carries less authority than an encyclical. It generally carries more urgency, however, than an ecclesiastical letter, and is usually issued when the Church is facing a particular and/or time-sensitive crisis, such as the battle for the internationalization of Jerusalem.

prayers for this intention.” “I am sure that your Excellency”, he continued, “will find for your diocese the means best calculated to acquaint your priests and people with the purpose and meaning of this crusade, and to carry out the ardent desire of the Holy Father”, a clear attempt to rouse American Catholics on the eve of the UN vote.²¹¹ From mid-November until the UN vote, various archdiocesan and diocesan associations, including those in Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit and Buffalo, engaged in letter-writing campaigns urging federal representatives adopt a solution amenable to the Vatican and to global Catholicism.²¹²

Further evidence of the leadership of American Catholics on the question of Palestine was highlighted by a request made in October by Vittorio Veronese, president of Italian Catholic Action to Carroll, when he requested that the NCWC present his organization’s petition, demanding the full internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs, to the UN.²¹³ “It is my personal conviction,” Veronese stated, “that at this time American Catholics (being closest to the high international assembly and, as free citizens of a great country, able to make themselves heard) can do so much so that the rights of Christendom may be neither ignored nor go unrecognized. I take leave, therefore, in the name of Italian Catholic Action, to ask you, as General Secretary of the NCWC, to be the authoritative interpreter of our ardent desire to see the problem of the Land of Jesus

²¹¹ Amleto Cicognani to the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, 15 November 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

²¹² See, for example, John Francis O’Hara (Bishop of Buffalo) to Howard Carroll [Washington], 9 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

²¹³ Vittorio Veronese to Howard Carroll [Washington], 15 October 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

solved according to justice.”²¹⁴ In alluding to the fact that Italy was not a UN member state, and again to the singular position of American Catholics in the ‘Catholic international’, he concluded that “Since Italy is not allowed to express, together with other free nations, its opinion on the Palestinian problem, may the American Catholics be our spokesmen in this cause, which is common to us all.” On 14 November, Schaefer presented the petition to the UN General Assembly. On 5 December, just days before the UN vote on Jerusalem, Carroll forwarded copies of the letter to Truman, Acheson and Austin, and forwarded dozens more copies to Schaefer for distribution to UN delegates.²¹⁵ The statement was also given wide exposure in the diocesan press. In his letter to Truman, Carroll informed the president that he spoke “for the Catholics of Italy, as well as of the rest of the world.” To Veronese, Carroll expressed that the “joint efforts of the Catholics throughout the world may result in a decision which will satisfy our collective aspirations.”²¹⁶

The initial six-day debate on the PCC report began on 24 November. Three views quickly emerged on the future of Jerusalem: the first, evident in an Australian draft resolution which favoured a full *corpus separatum*, as originally proposed by the November 1947 General Assembly resolution; the second, supported by the United States, which advocated for the PCC’s ‘limited internationalization’; and a third view, proposed by Israel, which pledged the protection of the Holy Places themselves, in line with similar proposals that Herzog had earlier presented to the Vatican directly. Yossi

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

²¹⁵ See Howard Carroll to Harry S. Truman [Washington], 5 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 22. Facsimiles of this letter were also forwarded to Dean Acheson and Warren Austin.

²¹⁶ Howard Carroll to Vittorio Veronese [Rome], 6 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

Feintuch has noted a growing American ambivalence at this stage of the negotiations, a hesitation he traced to two factors. The first was the charting of a course designed to offend neither supporters nor detractors of *corpus separatum*, namely Jews and most Protestants groups on one side, and American Catholics (who had mounted an intensive pressure campaign of their own since October) on the other. The second factor in Washington's vacillation was American underestimation of the Vatican's ability to coordinate Catholic states into nearly unanimous support for internationalization.²¹⁷ The first signs of wavering came on 29 November, when the American delegation chose not to participate in a seventeen nation sub-committee formed to study the various proposals. This committee, comprised of a large number of Arab states, and also including the Soviet Union, adopted the Australian draft resolution on 2 December, thus inviting the General Assembly to restate its intention to see a permanent international regime established in Jerusalem as a *corpus separatum*.²¹⁸ On 9 December, the committee's resolution for a full *corpus separatum* was placed back on the agenda of the General Assembly.

Schaefer, who had monitored voting intentions closely for both the American Church and the Vatican, expressed concern over the expected votes of several Latin American states on the final ballot. On 7 December, Tardini wired a number of these delegations, urging them to support a resolution that was in line with the papal encyclicals. Spellman, from New York, also called papal nuncios in Latin American capitals to make vigorous representations to their governments to stand in line with the

²¹⁷ Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 79-85.

²¹⁸ *Ibid*, 78.

Vatican on the Jerusalem vote.²¹⁹ The cardinal's intervention appeared to account for a shift in the voting intentions of at least four members (Mexico, Venezuela, Haiti and Chile), states that had either voted against the Australian resolution, or had abstained during a 7 December preliminary ballot. Spellman similarly wired the head of the Philippine delegation, Carlos Romulo, upon learning that he was about to cast a 'no' vote on 9 December. Spellman was, in the end, able to secure the support of Romulo in the final vote.

On 9 December, after ten hours of debate marked by tensions and disagreements, the committee voted 35 to 13 to internationalize the Jerusalem area as outlined in the 1947 partition plan, with support coming from what the NCWC described as "an unusual alignment of Latin American, Arab and Soviet bloc states."²²⁰ Notable supporters included the Philippines (which Spellman had aggressively courted), the Soviet Union, Brazil, Belgium and Luxembourg (which had wavered to the final hours), and a clutch of Latin American and Arab states.²²¹ Though the United States, Britain and Canada opposed the resolution, the outcome was a clear victory for the Vatican and the American Church, which had coordinated and cultivated the 'Catholic vote' at the UN until the final hours.²²² An amendment introduced by El Salvador (which had assured Schaefer of

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²²⁰ 'Jerusalem Internationalized by 38 to 14 Vote in General Assembly of United Nations', (NCWC News Service Dispatch), 12 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 24, File 44.

²²¹ Other affirmative votes came from Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Burma, Byelorussia, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Greece, Haiti, India, Iran, Iraq, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Yemen. See 'The Vote on Internationalization of Jerusalem by Nations', 12 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 24, File 44.

²²² Others opposed included Israel, Jordan, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Guatemala, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, South Africa, Uruguay and Yugoslavia. See reference above. Chile's abstention was later

support), defined the internationalized area as Jerusalem and its environs, including Bethlehem and other towns, while another amendment, sponsored by the Soviets and Lebanon, urged” immediate implementation.”²²³ Though the outcome was everything the Vatican could have realistically hoped for, a Colombian delegate to the PCC, who had cited the solidarity of Catholic states as crucial to the outcome, presciently observed that “now [was] not the time to stop praying”, an allusion to the difficulties of implementing the plan.²²⁴

Just days after the vote, Schaefer composed a short memo outlining the factors that had contributed to the success of the Vatican and the international Church in securing a *corpus separatum* for Jerusalem.²²⁵ The prime factor, she noted, was the solidarity of the ‘Catholic vote’ in the final tally. Though the chatter at Lake Success and reportage in the American mainstream press focused on “Vatican pressure and Roman Catholic opinion on Latin American governments”, she observed, less noted was the support of ‘Catholic’ European states in the final vote. France, Belgium and Luxembourg, “none of which were openly committed to full internationalization at the outset”, voted in the affirmative, with the Netherlands, another state with a large Catholic population, abstaining. European ‘no’ votes were registered by predominantly Protestant states,

explained by Schaefer as a result of the pressure of Chilean Jews, who, “a week before the final vote, put the screws on the President to abstain from the Jerusalem question.” Schaefer further described the “dangerous forces” of Masonry and Judaism in Chile. See ‘Memorandum- Background Information- Jerusalem’, January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

²²³ ‘Jerusalem Internationalized by 38 to 14 Vote in General Assembly of United Nations’, (NCWC News Service Dispatch), 12 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 24, File 44.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*

²²⁵ ‘Memo- Factors Contributing to the Final Adoption of the Resolution on the Internationalization of Jerusalem’, 15 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

including Britain, Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Schaefer also credited the solidarity of Arab states, citing Charles Malik's efforts, whom she credited with "spearheading" the Arab vote, and who was "insistent and articulate in stressing the religious interests and in presenting the views of religious leaders, twice referring to the papal encyclicals and reading into the record the statement of the Catholic hierarchy of the United States." His "exposition of the thesis of Israel's expansionist aims to encompass all of Jerusalem, and of the United States' consistent support of Israel," she observed, "had its effect."²²⁶ Israeli intransigence had indeed, she opined, contributed to the results of the final vote, in raising fears that the General Assembly could be coerced into bending to the will of one member, and into accepting "the dangerous precedent of recognizing de facto situations achieved by force of arms, or be led by *fait accompli* tactics."²²⁷ Schaefer's reflection on the vote shed an interesting light on Spellman's role, when she noted that Manila's UN representative voted in the affirmative, even though Elpidio Quirino, president of the Philippines, was "known to be opposed to the full internationalization resolution." Finally, Schaefer credited Soviet bloc votes, which came from the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Byelorussia, as also having carried the day.

Schaefer also traced the reactions of various delegations to the vote. On 16 December, at a UN post-General Assembly meeting for observers and NGO's, she noted that most attendees shared "a marked reluctance to comment on the internationalization vote," despite attempts by American officials to draw out reactions.²²⁸ She observed,

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

²²⁷ *Ibid*, 2.

²²⁸ 'Confidential Memorandum- Comments on the General Assembly Resolution on the Internationalization of Jerusalem', 16 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

however, that there was “less sympathy for the Israeli stand than the [secular] American and Jewish press would imply.” Indeed, reactions from Tel Aviv and in Israeli-friendly press organs were severely critical of the UN verdict. The *New York Post*, which had been an opponent of internationalization, opined that “In moral terms, the UN decision is shabby beyond belief...its religious mask shows through, its legal garments are skimpy, its moral grounds non-existent, it unsettles rather than settles the peace, and it lacks any method of enforcement.”²²⁹ Moshe Sharett called 9 December a “dark day” for the UN, and stormed that “Israel [was] aligned against the whole world,” and charged that “three powerful forces have joined hands against us- the Arab world, the Communist world and the Catholic world.”²³⁰ “The ‘Catholic attitude’ manifested,” in Sharett’s view, “a fanatical religious dogma, the desire to seek revenge for a nation’s sin and to settle an account of 1900 years standing.”²³¹ Protestant groups such as the ACPC, which had also warned against a *corpus separatum*, joined the chorus of denunciation, criticizing the plan as “dangerous and unnecessary.”²³² *The Nation*, a Protestant journal, expressed its own hypothesis on Israel’s defeat. On 17 December, Lillie Schultz, secretary of the American Christian Committee for Palestine, and a UN observer, penned an article tracing the voting patterns on 9 December to the Vatican’s pervasive influence. “The

²²⁹ *New York Post*, 12 December 1949. Quoted in Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 83.

²³⁰ *Brooklyn Tablet*, ‘Israel Defies UN Decision to Make Jerusalem Free’, 17 December 1949, 1.

²³¹ *America*, ‘Trygve Lie’s New Year’, 14 January 1950, 1.

²³² Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 84.

immediate problem the UN faces,” she concluded, “is to destroy the Vatican’s power of coercion.”²³³

The full internationalization of Jerusalem and its environs, delivered in no small part by the activism of the Vatican and particularly the American Catholic Church, was evidence of the vitality of Roman Catholic trans-nationalism on the Palestine question. The failure to enlist American support, however, spoke volumes on the inherent limits of papal and wider Roman Catholic power. The American position, of course, was based on a range of domestic and international considerations, but it also revealed a moderating relationship between Truman and the Vatican of Pope Pius XII. And though the vote was indeed a symbolic victory for the Roman Catholic ‘international’, it would be chimerical, as subsequent events would vividly illustrate.

²³³ *The Nation*, ‘The Jerusalem Story: A Victory for the Vatican’, 17 December 1949.

Chapter 5

Final Struggles: Defeat and Retreat of the 'Catholic Orbit', 1950-1958

In the immediate aftermath of the December 1949 vote, congratulations abounded in the Catholic 'orbit'. The NCWC's Howard Carroll praised the "masterful and effective championing of Christian interests" of Dr Charles Malik, head of the Lebanese legation to the UN, who had read sections of the American bishops statement for 1949 into his speech to the Ad Hoc Political Committee on 26 November.¹ Malik was assured that his efforts had "elicited widespread admiration and was a source of deep gratification." On 3 January 1950, the Vatican, through Cicognani, expressed its thanks for the activism of the American Catholic Church. "I am directed to express the sentiments of profound gratitude of the Secretariat of State", he wrote, "for the cooperation which the entire Episcopate of the United States gave in courageously making known and repeating the words of the Supreme Pontiff for the defence of the rights of the Church in the land of Our Blessed Saviour."² In closing, the Vatican reserved special praise for the NCWC and the advocacy of Schaefer's 'UN Office'. "In a special manner I have been asked to express appreciation for the cooperation of the staff of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in supplying timely information to the Secretariat of State regarding this question, and for the success they attained in their contacts with persons useful in the task of making known the point of view of the Holy See."³

¹ Howard Carroll to Dr. Charles Malik, 28 December 1949, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 25, File 44.

² Amleto Cicognani to John T. McNicholas, 3 January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 25, File 44.

³ *Ibid.*

The success of international Roman Catholic efforts in gaining a favourable resolution on Jerusalem, however, was quickly overshadowed by realities on the ground. Israel and Trans-Jordan, in short order, unequivocally rejected a plan that would eliminate their sovereignty in the Holy City. Israel quickly moved to establish a more permanent national presence in the city, clearly intended to demonstrate its rejection of the UN's Jerusalem statute. In December of 1949, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion had already driven home the point that Israel would refuse to comply with the UN's resolution for an internationalized Jerusalem when he declared that a "Jewish Jerusalem [was] an organic and inseparable part of the State of Israel," and if forced to, Jews would "sacrifice themselves for [it] no less than Englishmen for London, Russians for Moscow or Americans for Washington."⁴ An Israeli government memorandum later explained its position in more sober tones. "The suggestion that Israel is nothing to Jerusalem and Jerusalem is nothing to Israel may appear fantastic, yet this bewildering thesis is explicitly held up by the [*corpus separatum*]. One cannot have it both ways. It is an axiom that Israel cannot be regarded as a factor in the implementation of a regime based on the disappearance of its own authority."⁵ As such, Tel Aviv wasted little time in preparing to make Ben-Gurion's sentiments a concrete reality. On 16 December, just days after the vote, he set 1 January 1950 as the deadline to transfer Israel's government ministries to Jerusalem, effectively establishing the city as the national capital, despite its uncertain legal status. Trans-Jordan's King 'Abdullah similarly flouted calls to

⁴ See Yossi Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem* (Westport, 1987): 87-88.

⁵ 'Israel Office of Information: Israel Submits a Jerusalem Plan', 28 May 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 26, File 44.

internationalize the city, and he ordered permanent Friday prayers to be held in the city, which he attended personally.

Israeli and Jordanian intractability came at the head of a long list of factors that soon militated against Vatican and American Catholic designs for Jerusalem. These included the effective end of the Myron Taylor mission in January 1950, the ambiguity of Washington's Jerusalem policy at the UN, American Protestant support for a Jewish Jerusalem, and the withdrawal of Soviet bloc support for the *corpus separatum* (which had been key to securing the December 1949 agreement). Added to this were signs of a breakdown in international Catholic solidarity on the Jerusalem question, where some states regarded the pursuit of territorial internationalization as just, but ultimately unfeasible.

Throughout 1950, the Vatican could continue to count on the support of American Catholics on the issue. The Jerusalem question was re-examined by the Trusteeship Council in January, when a committee was convened at Geneva to hammer out a functioning resolution, given Israeli and Jordanian reticence. On 5 January, the NCWC's General Secretary, Howard Carroll, pressed the American delegation at Geneva on its Jerusalem policy, anxious to secure assurances that the United States would seek to uphold the majority decision of December 1949.⁶ The delegation's response confirmed Carroll's concerns that American support for the status quo at Geneva (ie: *corpus separatum*) would not be forthcoming. The delegation would confirm only that the United States would seek a "workable resolution" which would guarantee the protection

⁶ Howard Carroll to Porter McKeever, 2 January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 25, File 44.

of the Holy Places, would be acceptable to Israel and Jordan, and satisfy the international community's desire for peace and stability in the region.⁷

Miss Zizzamia Goes to Geneva

As it became evident that American support for the December 1949 resolution could not be counted upon, the importance of making known the 'Catholic' viewpoint at Geneva, and of fomenting support among the various delegations there, became increasingly essential. On this score, the NCWC's 'UN Office' dispatched Alba Zizzamia, Catherine Schaefer's assistant, to the Trusteeship Council's Geneva session in January 1950. Her mandate was threefold: to keep the American bishops and the Vatican apprised of developments on the Jerusalem question, to supply the diocesan press with reports, and, where possible, to disseminate the Roman Catholic position among the various delegations. Before arriving in Geneva, Zizzamia was received in a private audience by Pope Pius XII, where she informed him of her mandate in Geneva. The Pope, on his part, thanked the NCWC for its efforts on Jerusalem, an issue which remained "a most serious question" both to him personally and to the international Church, a sentiment the Pope repeated to his guest throughout the short audience.⁸

At Geneva, Zizzamia soon discovered that *corpus separatum* scheme for Jerusalem, which had been passed by a UN majority resolution just a month previous, was under attack from a number of quarters. Most notably, she sensed the willingness of American delegates to support a revised and diminished statute, consistent with the

⁷ Porter McKeever to Howard Carroll, 6 January 1950, NCWC/OGA/ACUA, Box 25, File 44.

⁸ Alba Zizzamia to Catherine Schaefer, 15 January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 12.

response that Carroll had received earlier in the month. Though the United States had not supported the December 1949 agreement, the NCWC had hoped that American delegates, in following their own precedent, would support the majority decision. Francis Sayre, head of the United States delegation, however, expressed the “unrealizable” nature of the *corpus separatum*, a solution that could not be imposed without force. “It will not mean peace,” said Sayre, “and it is not Christian,” a clear challenge to the Roman Catholic Church, which remained the most powerful advocate of full internationalization in the Christian world.⁹ Sayre also informed Zizzamia that the United States could not support any action on Jerusalem that might require the deployment of American troops to the city, a concern that Truman had previously communicated to Spellman.¹⁰ By late January, Zizzamia reported to Carroll that American support on maintaining the status quo, or even on remaining benign on initiatives to water-down the *corpus separatum*, was unlikely. From this point forward, it was evident that Washington sought a compromise solution for Jerusalem, amenable to Israel, despite the milquetoast assurances that Truman and officials in the American government had offered Catholic leaders the previous year.

In another report, Zizzamia noted the “unwholesome” atmosphere at Geneva, where “the preponderance of sentiment is not favourable to the Catholic viewpoint, which is regarded as unrealistic if not unjust.”¹¹ She noted several Latin and South American delegates who appeared to favour a revised statute on Jerusalem. The Philippines, which

⁹ ‘Memorandum- Trusteeship Council- Jerusalem’, 20 January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ ‘Memorandum- Trusteeship Council- Jerusalem’, 6 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

Spellman had notably swayed in the final hours of the December vote, also appeared to be shading toward support for a compromise solution. She further noted that Pierre Ryckmans, head of the Belgian delegation, “made no attempt to hide his irritation” at Catholic attempts to maintain the *corpus separatum* against all evidence that it could succeed. “Why stick to the Assembly resolution of 9 December,” he intoned to Zizzamia, “when there is no way at all to implement it?”¹² In confidence, a French delegate echoed Ryckmans, informing Zizzamia that “if it were not for religious fanaticisms in Jerusalem, the question could be settled. The Catholic Church and Catholic organizations are very stupid, because if a [compromise solution] is not accepted, there will be nothing.”¹³ Only among Arab delegations did she find unanimous support in maintaining the *corpus separatum*. Iraq’s Dr. Faizal Jamali assured her that Arab states would not accept a watered-down solution. “If the Arabs and the Catholics stick together,” he observed, “we can block any other plan,” though he admitted that such a statute “would probably remain a dead letter.”¹⁴

The revised statute that emerged from the Trusteeship Council’s Geneva session did reflect the prevailing spirit among delegates there, namely a compromise statute reflective of the realities ‘on the ground’. It was a plan inimical to that sought by the Vatican and American Catholics, and a revision of a UN majority decision reached just

¹² ‘Memorandum- Jerusalem’, 8 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 25, File 44.

¹³ ‘Memorandum- Trusteeship Council- Jerusalem’, 6 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

¹⁴ ‘Memorandum: Possible Statute for Jerusalem as Envisaged by Mr. Roger Garreau, President of the Trusteeship Council’, 31 January 1950, NCWC/ACUA/OGS, Box 169, File 30. In the same memo, Zizzamia mentioned that Fazali thought a ‘dead letter’ might, at the very least, “teach the Jews a lesson”, and provide a pretext to an Arab armed intervention in Israel.

weeks previous. The ‘Garreau Plan’, tabled by French representative Roger Garreau, proposed that as the area defined by the General Assembly resolution was too extensive to be administered by the UN, extraterritoriality be applied only in the area regarded as “absolutely essential” to the “protection of the Holy Places and freedom of movement for pilgrims.”¹⁵ In essence, the Garreau Plan called for the division of the territory of Jerusalem into three parts: an Israeli zone under the authority and administration of Israel, a Jordanian zone under the authority and administration of Jordan, and an ‘International City’, under the sole authority and responsibility of a UN appointed ‘Governor of the Holy Places’.¹⁶

The Garreau Plan appeared to garner the support of a majority of the delegations which opposed the December 1949 resolution, including the United States, and who generally favoured a revised scheme acceptable to both Israel and Jordan. The plan also received the endorsement of the powerful American Christian Palestine Committee (ACPC), the prominent Christian Zionist organization, which had dispatched a ‘fact finding’ mission to Jerusalem in December and January. At a 19 January press conference in New York, the ACPC discussed its “findings on the feasibility of the internationalization plan for Jerusalem,” concluding that the *corpus separatum* idea was “dangerous and unnecessary.”¹⁷ The statement closely mirrored Sayre’s position at

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ See Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 92-93.

¹⁷ ‘Report by Christian Fact-Finding Mission on Jerusalem: Rejects Internationalization Plan After Investigation There’, Press Release: American Christian Palestine Committee, 19 January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 25. The report listed a number of factors supporting a revised statute for Jerusalem, including the fact that reports of Israeli desecration to shrines were exaggerated, the

Geneva in recommending a UN commissioner for the Holy Places, but not territorial internationalization, which might necessitate the deployment of American troops. That the report was forwarded specifically to Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Trusteeship Council president Roger Garreau, and Sayre suggests that it was clearly intended to influence American policy at Geneva.

The ACPC report posed a direct challenge to the Roman Catholic position, which continued to advocate for full territorial internationalization. A concerned Zizzamia noted to Carroll that not only were ACPC observers active in Geneva, but that they also “seemed to be on very good terms with members of the U.S. delegation.”¹⁸ Its observers, her report continued, were creating the impression among delegates that Roman Catholic groups, both in Palestine and abroad, accepted the Garreau Plan as a realistic compromise. In private conversation, Garreau himself noted that Cardinal Spellman “had been shown the plan,” suggesting that the de facto head of the American Catholic Church was not opposed to it. Garreau further suggested that he had received no protest from the Vatican, despite Zizzamia’s insistence that papal policy remained unchanged.¹⁹ The inclusion of the ACPC report as an enclosure to the Garreau Plan, submitted on 13 January, and the reading of the report to a session of the Trusteeship Council by Samuel Guy Inman, a member of the ACPC’s ‘fact finding’ mission, was evidence of the

diminishment of tensions between Jew and Arab in the territory, and the sensibility of the Garreau Plan which, according to the ACPC, was the most sensible and practical solution moving forward.

¹⁸ ‘Memorandum- Trusteeship Council- Jerusalem’, 6 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

¹⁹ ‘Memorandum- Trusteeship Council- Jerusalem’, 20 January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

influence the organization wielded at Geneva.²⁰ Inman's authority was buttressed by his background as an academic and consultant to the State Department, where he was credited with shaping Washington's "Good Neighbor" policy with Latin and South American states. During his address before the Council on 11 February, Inman intimated that his organization's view was representative of global Christian interests generally, and he mentioned "two or three times that the ACPC includes in its membership Catholic laymen."²¹ "Mr. Inman seems to be creating the impression," Zizzamia reported to Carroll, "that he is speaking for Catholic opinion." Though Iraq's delegate, Faizal Jamali, questioned the political slant of the ACPC, charging that it "wore Zionist glasses", the organization was nonetheless successful in shaping the view that Christians, including Roman Catholics, were accepting of revisions to the 1949 *corpus separatum* agreement.²²

The task of correcting that impression at Geneva fell largely to Zizzamia, given that the Vatican did not have its own representative at the Trusteeship Council's session. On 11 February, a draft resolution by the delegate of the Dominican Republic, Max Henriquez Urena, to invite a Vatican representative to present his views, was withdrawn.²³ The Council decided, without a vote, that communications with the Holy See could be made through regular diplomatic channels, since "some members had

²⁰ Inman was a leading authority on Latin American affairs, and was a pastor and academic of note, teaching at the University of Pennsylvania and lecturing at a wide range of leading American universities. He also served as Roosevelt's advisor at the Buenos Aires Conference (1936), where the United States reaffirmed the Monroe Doctrine.

²¹ 'UN Group Votes to Start Immediately on Jerusalem Internationalization Vote', NCWC News Service, 13 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 25, File 44.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ NCWC News Service, 'UN Group Votes to Start Immediately on Jerusalem Internationalization Statute', 13 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 25, File 44.

accredited diplomats posted there.”²⁴ Waning enthusiasm for full internationalization, however, even among ‘Catholic’ delegates, meant that Zizzamia would play a heightened role in registering papal dissatisfaction with the Garreau Plan.

The Vatican did reject the plan, a position based on drafts of it forwarded to Rome by Zizzamia. On 30 January, on the very eve of Garreau’s tabling of the plan, the Vatican issued a memorandum outlining its unequivocal position on Jerusalem “as clearly set forth in the papal encyclicals.”²⁵ It made clear that the Holy See “had expressed its position, and did not accept or approve any compromises,” a statement clearly intended to scuttle the idea that Rome was softening its stand. It demanded adherence to the status quo, fearing that a plan such as Garreau’s would create more turmoil than it would resolve.²⁶ This was followed by a *pro memoria* of 6 February, which more strenuously outlined Vatican objections to the plan. It specifically criticized Garreau’s notion of creating ‘zones’ in Jerusalem, charging that it “was not clear how a boundary can be viable which crosses the narrow streets and alleys of the Old City, nor how these little international islands can escape damage in case of an armed conflict.”²⁷ It concluded that the Holy See, in rejecting the plan, “could not share in the responsibility for its acceptance on the part of the Trusteeship Council.” In early February, as the Council prepared to debate the Garreau Plan, Zizzamia actively disseminated the Vatican’s stand

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ ‘Memorandum- Jerusalem’, 30 January 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Pro Memoria- Jerusalem*, 6 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

among various delegations, making clear that any suggestion of a moderated Roman Catholic stance was categorically false.

Archival evidence suggests that, in the crucial days of debate on the Garreau Plan before the Trusteeship Council, Roman Catholic reticence to accept a compromise continued to shape the responses of a number of delegations, including that of the United States. Yossi Feintuch has observed that the American delegation's position on the Garreau Plan became increasingly ambiguous and incoherent in late January and early February, reflective of a desire to alienate neither opponents nor proponents of a revised Jerusalem statute.²⁸ In confidence, delegates revealed to Zizzamia that domestic politics continued to play a role in American policy. American Catholic and Jewish pressure, specifically, appeared to play a role in Washington's indeterminate stance. This was expressed by France's Pierre de Leusse, who intoned that despite "the formidable propaganda campaign sponsored by Israel, the money used on the press (and some say among the delegates), and the pressure put on the American government, attention will have to be paid to Catholic strength in the U.S. Mr. Truman will have to take into account the Catholic votes, which are far more numerous than the Jewish votes, although the Jews have more money."²⁹ As such, he predicted that Sayre's eventual stance would be one of "passing the buck" to avoid political entanglement in the United States.³⁰ Australia's John

²⁸ Feintuch contends that while Francis Sayre, head of the American delegation at Geneva, favoured the Garreau Plan, mixed signals from Washington precluded him from taking a definitive stance on the proposal. See Feintuch's *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 92-93.

²⁹ 'Memorandum- Jerusalem', 8 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

³⁰ *Ibid.* This was despite the fact that Sayre, from the start, regarded the Garreau Plan as the best possible solution to a perplexing problem. In early March, Zizzamia reported that Sayre "seemed to regret that the

Hood offered similar sentiments, citing “opposing parties” as being central to the UN’s lack of resolve on the Jerusalem question. “This was notably true for the United States,” he offered, “which is, after all, ‘the kingpin’ in this.”³¹

De Leusse’s prediction that the American delegation would “pass the buck” on the Garreau Plan became a reality on 10 February, when the Trusteeship Council shelved the proposal in favour of a Chinese draft resolution calling for the immediate consideration of the 1948 Jerusalem Statute, which had called for the complete territorial internationalization of the city. A Belgian amendment, introduced by Pierre Ryckmans, provided for the implementation of the statute at a date to be determined later, and made its enactment subject to the approval of Israel and Trans-Jordan. Secretary of State Acheson instructed Sayre to vote for the Statute, provided the Belgian amendments were carried, but to follow up his vote with a statement affirming to the Council that it would have to pass muster with Israel and Jordan before implementation. It was a stance perfectly crafted to offend neither camp of the *corpus separatum* debate, and bore clear signs of being influenced, at least in part, by American domestic politics. That Sayre was instructed to abstain on the final vote, for fear of creating an impression that the United States had reversed its position against internationalization, epitomized Washington’s sensitivity to the Jerusalem question.

Though the defeat of the Garreau Plan could most logically be traced to the resolute stand of Arab delegations at Geneva, most notably those of Iraq and Syria, the

Garreau Plan had died”, and that he regarded complete internationalization as “turning back history.” See ‘Memorandum- Jerusalem’, 3 March 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 25.

³¹ ‘Memorandum- Jerusalem’, 9 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

influence wielded by the Vatican through Catholic delegates and observers was noted in a number of quarters. The ACPC's Samuel Guy Inman, who had presented the Trusteeship Council his organization's 'report' on the feasibility of internationalization, held a late February press conference at Lake Success where he bemoaned the revival of the *corpus separatum*, charging that it would "make Jerusalem a centre of international intrigue and disorder."³² Though Inman claimed that American public opinion was solidly behind his conclusions, he suggested larger forces were at play in Geneva. "It is no secret," he exclaimed, "that the Vatican wants to create a sub-capital at Jerusalem."³³ Similar sentiments were expressed to Zizzamia earlier in the month, when an Israeli correspondent, whose wife was attached to the Israeli embassy in Washington, provided to her his own interpretation of Vatican policy. "It is no secret the Vatican wants a Vatican city in Jerusalem. Since it did not get control as it wished when the commission under the old mandate failed to be set up, it hopes to get Catholic control there now through the Catholic countries at the UN."³⁴ He further stated, with some intensity, that "the Jerusalem question is a bone in our throat." The next week, a correspondent for the *London Observer* and the *Manchester Guardian*, "a Jew," as Zizzamia indentified him, assured her that Belgium's Ryckmans "was [representing] the Vatican's point of view" at Geneva.³⁵

³² Memorandum- Jerusalem, 17 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 25. Inman also raised the spectre of Soviet infiltration of an internationalized Jerusalem, invoking a bogeyman that had been employed by all sides of the debate.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 17 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 25.

³⁵ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 23 February 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 25.

The Trusteeship Council's adoption of the Jerusalem Statute on 4 April, therefore, barely altered from the December 1949 resolution, appeared to be another example of Roman Catholic interests snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. It was again, however, a largely illusory triumph, as its practical implementation proved much more difficult than its adoption. The Trans-Jordanian election of 11 April created further barriers, as its results confirmed the unity of the Eastern and Western banks of the Jordan and their merging into one unified state, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan (hereafter Jordan). The following day, Jordan notified the UN that it had formally annexed central Palestine and eastern Jerusalem (which it had already occupied).³⁶ Just five days after the incorporation of eastern Jerusalem into Jordan, the Soviet envoy to the UN informed Secretary General Trygve Lie that, in light of developments in Jerusalem, Moscow considered the Jerusalem Statute unfeasible, and would not continue to support it. It was a development that marked the end of the curious Catholic-Arab-Soviet consensus on the *corpus separatum*, placing greater pressure on 'Catholic' delegations to deliver a Jerusalem solution amenable to the Vatican.

From April onward, however, given the rapid evolution of circumstances in the Holy City, Zizzamia noted a definitive waning of support for carrying out the Jerusalem Statute. Though the United States had remained theoretically neutral on the 4 April vote, abstaining along with the United Kingdom, evidence suggests that the American delegation's impatience with the old formula was growing. "It is increasingly evident that the U.S. delegation," noted Zizzamia, "has no interest whatsoever with the total

³⁶ Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 95.

internationalization plan.”³⁷ Sayre, head of the mission, noted privately that he “would be willing to cooperate if anyone will show us how internationalization can be put into effect, but we feel it is turning back history.”

Flagging enthusiasm for internationalization extended beyond the American delegation, as Zizzamia reported from Geneva the growing sense of its ultimate futility. “Many delegates, in private conversation, admit that internationalization was the best, long-run solution,” she noted to Carroll in May, “but they professed utter helplessness as to the possibility of realizing it.”³⁸ She also noted that Australia’s John Hood, who had introduced his country’s favourable resolution regarding internationalization at the December 1949 General Assembly session, and who “upheld it with a skilled diplomacy”, was to become Australian ambassador to Indonesia. “His successor on the Trusteeship Council could, without embarrassment,” she explained, “express a change in the Australian position.”³⁹ In addition, she revealed uncertainty on the part of a number of South American delegations who could not be counted on if the question, as it appeared it would, was returned to the General Assembly. In late April, in a moment of candour, she bluntly assessed the situation for Carroll. “The fact that there is a diminishing interest in the internationalization of Jerusalem, even among the nations that originally voted for it, should be recognized. If the Statute elaborated by the Trusteeship Council is not implemented, which does not at the moment seem at all likely, it should be decided

³⁷ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 3 March 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 25.

³⁸ Memorandum- Sixth Session of the UN Trusteeship Council, 23 May 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 53.

³⁹ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 24 April 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 24.

whether it is advisable from the viewpoint of Catholic interests to keep the question open and before the United Nations.”⁴⁰

Jerusalem Calling: Zionist Parry and Roman Catholic Riposte

From the early spring of 1950 onward, the notion of *corpus separatum* was also countered by a slick and well-orchestrated propaganda campaign by the Israeli Foreign Ministry, an effort Uri Bialer considers unique in the history of the Ministry.⁴¹ A special division, established in April 1950, was allocated considerable funds, recruited leading experts, and was active on the international scene. Its objective was to present Jewish Jerusalem to the world as a vital, modern city and an inseparable part of the State of Israel. It was also intended to emphasize the historic stake of Judaism in the city, and to emphasize the justice and practicality of Israel’s proposals for solution.⁴² To this end, the division commissioned numerous pamphlets and books for wide distribution to buttress Tel Aviv’s position. Special emissaries were also sent to the capitals of several Latin American states to disseminate the Israeli position among nominally pro-Vatican UN members, an initiative clearly intended to break up Catholic pro-internationalization ‘bloc’ which had functioned to keep the *corpus separatum* alive. Bialer notes, however, that Israeli efforts were careful not to engage in open polemics against the Vatican “so as not to provoke the other side to launch a vocal attack on us,” evidence that Tel Aviv continued to regard the Vatican, and its international allies, as a viable threat.

⁴⁰ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 26 April 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 26, File 159.

⁴¹ See Uri Bialer, *The Cross on the Star of David: The Christian World in Israel’s Foreign Policy, 1948-1967* (Bloomington, 2005), 45.

⁴² *Ibid.*

Israeli efforts to forge a compromise on Jerusalem were outlined in a memorandum detailing new proposals for the city, submitted on 26 May to the Trusteeship Council by Abba Eban, head of the Israeli mission to the UN.⁴³ The 16-page document outlined Tel Aviv's flexible new proposals for the city, which would have seen the internationalization of the immediate zone surrounding the Old City's sacred sites, and would allow for the establishment of a UN commissioner for the zone, who "would be wholly separate" from Israeli and Jordanian control, and who would enjoy "a certain degree of extraterritoriality so far as the Holy Places were concerned...[while] the authority of the occupying governments would be more or less withdrawn."⁴⁴ It was an arrangement giving the UN full territorial control of the Holy Sites. While not the *corpus separatum* agreed upon in 1949, the proposals were evidence of Israeli attempts to negotiate a conciliatory, yet favourable, resolution. In Garreau's view, the proposals showed "an understanding and benevolent attitude towards the legitimate demands of all parties concerned," and represented "a considerable advance towards a settlement."⁴⁵

In the United States, public opinion appeared to be growing in favour of a compromise solution along the lines of that proposed by Israel. The ACPC, on its part, offered its endorsement of Eban's proposal on 28 May. Just days before, Truman and Acheson received petitions, signed by almost 300 prominent Americans, which urged the United States to back the recent Israeli proposals. Signatories included a cross-section of

⁴³ Memorandum on the Question of Jerusalem: Analysis of the Statute for Jerusalem and a Proposal for a Solution, 26 May 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* See also Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 96.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

Protestant leaders, including bishops of the Episcopal Church (led by New York's Episcopalian bishop, Charles K. Gilbert), as well as Methodist, Unitarian and United Brethren leaders. Other signatories included college presidents, academics, Nobel Prize laureates and other notable figures. On 2 June, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt added her own support to the petition, a symbolic endorsement given President Roosevelt's close relationship with American Catholic leaders.⁴⁶ Also in support were several leading newspapers such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, which provided supportive editorials on the Israeli proposals. The following week, Carroll assured Cicognani that the NCWC was preparing to counter the statement, but his response indicated a growing pessimism in American Catholic circles. "The NCWC is, of course, preparing a critique of the statement for the press," he informed the apostolic delegate, "but it is too much to expect, even with our best efforts, that the attitude of the United States government will change radically. From our point of view it seems that only the steadfast and continuing support of Catholic nations which are members of the UN can assure the acceptance of the position of the Holy See."⁴⁷

Carroll's dour appraisal, however, did little to modify the Vatican line on Jerusalem. Nor did the growing consensus on a compromise to the *corpus separatum*, bolstered by Eban's articulate proposal, alter the Vatican's insistence on the original formula. To underscore this, Cicognani re-issued the *pro memoria* of 6 February to the NCWC the day after Eban's proposal was circulated at Geneva. On 31 May, the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Howard Carroll to Amleto Cicognani, 8 June 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

Vatican's insistence on the original plan was outlined in the *New York Times*.⁴⁸ Quoting "well informed Vatican circles", the article outlined papal opposition to the notion of Israeli or Jordanian sovereignty in Jerusalem which, given the existing proposal "could be broken in the event that hostilities were resumed," an event the Vatican considered likely. In essence, the Vatican considered the problem juridical, and not political, given that the *corpus separatum* would create an international zone in a space that was not legitimately Israeli or Jordanian to begin with. The December 1949 agreement, it concluded, "did not affect the principle of the nationality of Jerusalem, since no one disputes that principle. The question is one of administration and not of nationality."⁴⁹

On 12 June, the Trusteeship Council began its seventh session in an effort to formulate a report to the General Assembly recommending a solution to the Jerusalem question. Zizzamia noted that the session was held "in an atmosphere created by an extremely skilful Israeli propaganda and pressure campaign."⁵⁰ In light of this, Zizzamia suggested a two-pronged strategy in defence of the Vatican's interests. She advised "concerted action in on the part of the Catholic press in UN member states before the (December) General Assembly to counteract Israeli propaganda. One tactic might be a critical attitude, based on reasoned judgement however, of the compromise plans." She also advised, despite flagging support for the *corpus separatum*, "political pressure in the various countries, and especially in the United States." Within days of the session opening, it appeared that Zizzamia's suggested strategies would have some time to

⁴⁸ *New York Times*, 'Vatican Opposing Israel on Shrines', 31 May 1950, 1.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 15 June 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

germinate. On 14 June, just two days after convening, the Trusteeship Council resolved unanimously to inform the General Assembly of its inability to ensure the implementation of the Jerusalem Statute “either by force” or by “moral authority.”⁵¹ Garreau, as the Council president, admitted that “the results of his mission had proved disappointing and that the implementation of the statute would seem to be seriously compromised under present conditions.”⁵² “In other words”, Zizzamia’s report for the diocesan press noted wryly, “the Trusteeship Council has accomplished virtually nothing.”⁵³

The failure of the Trusteeship Council to resolve the Jerusalem conundrum did, however, allow time for the American Church to shape Catholic and wider opinion on the question, as well as to mount a more coherent pressure campaign in advance of the December meeting of the General Assembly. Optimism at the NCWC, however, was not running particularly high in the summer of 1950. In June, at Cicognani’s behest, Carroll ordered a critique of the ACPC statement in support of a Jewish Jerusalem, though he cautioned the apostolic delegate that “it is too much to expect, even with our best efforts, that the attitude of the United States government will change radically.”⁵⁴ Carroll placed greater hope in Roman Catholic delegates at the UN, advising Cicognani that “from our point of view, it seems that only the steadfast and continuing support of Catholic nations which are members of the UN can assure the acceptance of the position of the Holy

⁵¹ Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 98-99.

⁵² ‘Jerusalem Issue Returned to Assembly after Tepid Move to Internationalize’, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Howard Carroll to Amleto Cicognani, 8 June 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

See.”⁵⁵ On this score, the Holy See requested regular appraisals of developments both at the UN and in the United States, which the NCWC forwarded throughout the summer.⁵⁶

On the issue of shaping public discourse, the NCWC continued to defend the integrity of the *corpus separatum*, despite the deferral of debate on the question at the UN. Throughout the summer, the diocesan press, fed by reports from Schaefer and Zizzamia, highlighted the merits of full internationalization as well as the potential pitfalls of the various compromise schemes that surfaced in the first half of 1950.⁵⁷ In June, Carroll assured that the views of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem (bishop Tiran Nersoyan), who had penned an eloquent and persuasive defence of the Vatican’s position on Jerusalem, were given ample coverage in the diocesan papers. In order to balance what Catholics perceived as one-sided coverage in the mainstream secular press (and which generally favoured a compromise solution), Carroll also advocated for Catholic views to be aired in mainstream papers. On 4 June, the *New York Herald Tribune* carried the statement of Jerusalem’s bishop Nersoyan, which had been forwarded to the paper by Carroll.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ See, for example, Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 14 July 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 13; Howard Carroll to Amleto Cicognani, 28 July 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 13; Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 11 August 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 13.

⁵⁷ See, for example, ‘Jerusalem in International Law’, *America*, 15 April 1950, 33; ‘Internationalization Doomed’, *America*, 27 May 1950, 231; ‘Therefore, Internationalize Jerusalem’, *America*, 17 June 1950, 313.

⁵⁸ Howard Carroll to John Butler, 12 June 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26. Carroll’s efforts with New York papers were intended to combat a perceived bias in the coverage in the mainstream press. An NCWC press report observed that “metropolitan newspaper comment in New York in general tends to regard internationalization as a dead issue and to favour the latest Israeli proposals. Lack of consent of the parties concerned is the main argument used against internationalization. Yet in favouring the Israeli

In a bid to shape elite opinion, Catholic academic journals also highlighted the imperative for an internationalized Jerusalem. The March 1950 issue of *Thought*, a quarterly published by Fordham University, featured an article by Constantine Rauckaskas, a professor of international law at the school, which carefully outlined the historical evolution of the Jerusalem question.⁵⁹ Rauckaskas argued that the purpose of internationalization was not merely to protect the Holy Places from destruction and to guarantee access to them, as compromise solutions had suggested, but to “preserve the future peace in granting such places an administration which would be above the interest of any church or religion and above the particular interest of any nation or state.”⁶⁰ Rauckaskas opined that the preservation of the *corpus separatum* was essential to the maintenance of regional peace which, he concluded, should be the UN’s primary motive. In July *The Jurist*, published the Catholic University of America’s Faculty of Law, carried an article by law professor Peter Berger which argued for the maintenance of the *corpus separatum*.⁶¹ In a stark and juridical analysis, Berger delineated the case for an internationalized Jerusalem, arguing its justice in legal, historical, moral and practical terms. The piece was clearly intended to re-assert the case for *corpus separatum* amid the muddying waters of the various compromise solutions floated in the spring of 1950. It was also intended to confirm that the Vatican and American Catholics accepted nothing

proposals, the editorialists seemingly overlook the fact that Jordan has given no indication it will consent to these proposals either.” See ‘Jerusalem Issue Returned to Assembly After Tepid Move to Internationalize’, 19 June 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁵⁹ Constantine Rauckaskas, ‘The Jerusalem Problem: A Note on Legality’, *Thought* (Vol. 24, No. 96), March 1950: 100-114.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 113.

⁶¹ Peter Berger, ‘The Internationalization of Jerusalem’, *The Jurist* (Vol. 10, No. 3), July 1950: 8-41.

less than what was pledged in December 1949, despite chatter that a practical compromise was acceptable in Roman Catholic circles. At Carroll's behest, Schaefer distributed Berger's article to all the UN delegations as a reiteration of the Vatican's stand.⁶²

As the December General Assembly session drew nearer, however, American Catholic optimism on securing a favourable Jerusalem resolution was clearly waning, battered by a number of headwinds. The first of these was Israeli intransigence in claiming the city for the new state, despite its indeterminate legal status. In September, Schaefer noted the "fait accompli" attitude of Israeli delegates and officials at the UN, who "assumed that Jerusalem will be, and for all practical purposes was, a part of Israel."⁶³ Abba Eban, Israel's ambassador to the UN, confirmed Schaefer's sentiment in the September issue of *United Nations World*, the body's semi-official journal.⁶⁴ In it, Eban outlined the inherent historic and moral righteousness of a Jewish Jerusalem, the negation of which would be anti-democratic and against the wishes of the city's own residents. The *corpus separatum*, which he charged was "conceived in disregard of the wishes and interests of Jerusalem's population," was "courageously discarded by the Trusteeship Council and returned to the General Assembly unimplemented." Eban concluded that "democratic principles, which had a compulsion of their own, could least of all be set aside in the city of Jerusalem, in which the ideal of government by consent is

⁶² Howard Carroll to Catherine Schaefer, 28 July 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁶³ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 21 September 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 23, File 53.

⁶⁴ 'Where Israel Stands', *United Nations World*, September 1950: 7-11.

expressed in the daily practice of a proud and constructive national life.”⁶⁵ That Eban’s notions were steadily garnering acceptance among UN delegates was, by September, clear to leading figures in the NCWC.

A second headwind faced by the American Catholic lobby were the pointed critiques of that lobby itself by figures in the American liberal and academic establishment. The appearance of Paul Blanshard’s *American Freedom and Catholic Power* late in 1949 sparked a growing critique of the American Catholic political lobby, and of the Vatican’s attempts to shape Washington’s policies through its American faithful.⁶⁶ In the book Blanshard, a lawyer and assistant editor of the left-leaning weekly *The Nation*, asserted that the United States had a “Catholic problem” in that the American Catholic Church represented “an undemocratic system of alien control.” The critiques levelled by Blanshard appeared to pose a direct challenge to the growing political stridency of the American bishops and various organs of the Church. Though the work often barely concealed its nativist and anti-Catholic leanings, it received acclaim from a number of leading liberal intellectuals, including John Dewey, Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell. Far from an obscure polemic, the work sold nearly 300,000 copies in its first year, remaining on the *New York Times* bestseller list for seven months, making it, as John T. McGreevy has noted, “one of the most unusual bestsellers of 1949-1950.”⁶⁷ Though several leading Catholic figures, including John Courtney Murray, Robert C. Hartnett and James M. O’Neill, offered rebuttals to Blanshard’s charges, none of these

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 11.

⁶⁶ See Paul Blanshard, *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, (Boston: Beacon Books, 1949).

⁶⁷ See John T. McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History*, (New York: Norton, 2003): 166.

responses could undo the disrepute and sense of suspicion which had been draped over American Catholic political activism.⁶⁸

Blanshard's notions were buttressed later in 1950 by Pierre Van Paassen, a journalist and Unitarian minister whose book *Jerusalem Calling* levelled specific charges against the Vatican and the American Catholic lobby on the Holy City.⁶⁹ Apart from surveying the history of Catholic anti-Semitism, Van Paassen "illuminate[d]" American Catholicism's attempts to "subvert the triumph of Zionism through international political activism."⁷⁰ He charged that "the struggle of Rome against Israel goes on, and will be intensified as papal nuncios negotiate with Arab princes, and General Franco, to devise ways and means to prevent the new community of Israel from assuming a position and playing a role of importance in the international concert."⁷¹ Van Paassen also claimed to unveil the "machinations" of the American Catholic political lobby. "That the Vatican is out to gain control of the Holy Places," he charged,

...became evident during the debates on the internationalization of Jerusalem at the UN, when Cardinal Spellman of New York, throwing all restraint to the wind, telegraphed papal nuncios in various South American republics to insist to the governments to which they are accredited that they must take an uncompromising stand at Lake Success for the internationalization of the Holy

⁶⁸ See, for example, John Courtney Murray's 'Paul Blanshard and the New Nativism', *The Month* (April 1951): 214-225; James M. O'Neill, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1952); Robert C. Hartnett, 'My Debate with Mr. Blanshard', *America*, 18 March 1950, 689-691. Also appearing in 1949 was Avro Manhattan's *The Vatican in World Politics*, another polemic which sought to uncover the Vatican's attempts to "spiritually conquer the United States, and ultimately Catholicize the world." See Avro Manhattan, *The Vatican in World Politics* (London, 1949): 10.

⁶⁹ See Pierre Van Paassen, *Jerusalem Calling: A Frank Survey of the Chaotic International Scene* (New York, Dial Press, 1950).

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 12.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 190.

City. Internationalization in these circumstances would have been implemented by an international commission made up chiefly of Catholic South Americans, probably with a Monsignor at the head.”⁷²

Though a number of Van Paassen’s claims bordered on the fantastical, Catherine Schaefer warned the NCWC that the book would likely “stir up considerable anti-Catholic sentiment, particularly among the Jews.”⁷³ The charge of official anti-Semitism by the Church will be thrown around alot, I imagine. We should be prepared to meet the attacks that will come.”⁷⁴ American Catholic attempts to negate criticisms, however, couldn’t erase suspicions aroused by works such as Blanshard’s and Van Paassen’s.

The third headwind faced by American Catholic efforts to secure a Jerusalem Statute amenable to the Vatican was the growing convergence between American Jews, Protestants and liberals for a Jewish Jerusalem. It was a development which essentially ranged Catholics against a majority of their fellow citizens on the *corpus separatum*, underscoring the Roman inspiration of the American Catholic position. Added to this convergence was Washington’s growing desire for an “implementable” or “workable” solution for Jerusalem, consistent with Truman’s position as outlined to Spellman the previous summer. The president’s growing personal commitment to Israel and its interests, moreover, also boded ill for Catholic interests. In October, in a confidential

⁷² *Ibid*, 201-202.

⁷³ Van Paassen, for example, claimed to have visited the Vatican’s Sacred Congregation of Extraordinary Affairs in June of 1950, where he was told that “the state of Israel was an outpost of the Soviet Union in the Near East”. Cicognani denied that the author had ever been received at the Congregation, and Carroll informed Schaefer to “seize any occasion to make this fact known”. See Howard Carroll to Catherine Schaefer, 18 December 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 13.

⁷⁴ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 22 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 13. In order to blunt potential criticism, Schaefer ordered the reprinting and distribution of two pamphlets of the Catholic Association for International Peace (CAIP), ‘The Church and the Jews’ and Catholics and Jews.’

memorandum to the NCWC, Schaefer noted this confluence of forces ranged against Vatican and American Catholic policy for Jerusalem. Chief among these oppositional forces, she noted, was Washington's insistence on a compromise solution amenable to Israel and Jordan, a policy which produced "the weak and vacillating positions of other countries" on the Jerusalem question.⁷⁵ She highlighted the domestic factor in Washington's position, stating that "American policy on this question is undoubtedly made at the White House- that is, it is strictly political in a domestic sense," and noting Truman's "responsiveness to the cohesive vote and pressure of five million Jews."⁷⁶ "This policy," she continued, "is helped along by the constant lobbying of Israeli and American Jews, and by the attitude of the (Protestant) World Council of Churches, and by the press in the United States which constantly infers that the Vatican has changed its point of view and is willing to 'settle' for less than full internationalization." To correct this impression, she concluded to Carroll, "the first responsibility lies on Catholics in the United States."⁷⁷

Schaefer's UN Office Orchestrates a Final Push

Schaefer's memo amounted to a call to action prior to the upcoming General Assembly session, preparing the American Catholic lobby for yet another push to secure the Vatican's positions at the UN. On 22 October, she suggested an immediate and national program of action, given that the Jerusalem question was weeks away from appearing on the General Assembly's agenda. To this end, she suggested a concentrated

⁷⁵ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 22 October 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

⁷⁶ Jerusalem- Prospects in the Present Session of the General Assembly, October 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

⁷⁷ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 22 October 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

program of political and popular pressure by the American Catholic Church. Schaefer continued to believe that pressure on Washington, which was a lynch-pin on the Jerusalem question, could yield results if American Catholics mounted a concentrated campaign. Even down to this late stage, she intimated that pressure on Washington and the American delegation to the UN might yet bear fruit. “If, through United States pressure Israel could still be made willing to yield that portion of the Jerusalem area it now occupies, the task of persuading Jordan...to yield the Old City to international control would be simplified.”⁷⁸ To Schaefer, the key to exerting pressure on Israel was to exert pressure on Washington, which exercised more financial and diplomatic clout in Tel Aviv than any other power.

In terms of concrete plans, Schaefer urged a multi-pronged pressure campaign. She recommended that organizations such as the National Council for Catholic Women (NCCW) and the National Council for Catholic Men (NCCM) pass resolutions demanding that the Truman administration defend the *corpus separatum* “as was promised in the Democratic Party platform of 1948.”⁷⁹ She suggested that such resolutions “should be utilized on the local and state scale, as well as nationally, by means of group and individual letter writing to political figures, newspapers, etc.” On mobilizing parishioners, she lamented that “the Catholic public remains somewhat ignorant of the Palestine problem and the problem of Jerusalem. Could there not be some

⁷⁸ Jerusalem- Prospects in the Present Session of the General Assembly, October 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

sermons very soon in every diocese followed by prayers particularly for Jerusalem? The question will come up in the General Assembly in two weeks. Time is of the essence.”⁸⁰

Within days of Schaefer’s call to action, and just weeks before the General Assembly session to determine the fate of Jerusalem, the various organs of the American Church again began to mobilize. The NCCW, at its annual convention in October, produced a resolution again calling for the full internationalization of Jerusalem. The statement demanded that the UN honour its pledge on the Holy City which had, until then, been “flouted and ignored.”⁸¹ It urged the world body to implement its 1949 resolution “so that history may not accuse it of using its pledge to further special political and territorial aims.” It specifically called on Washington to “respect not only the deep convictions and desires which so many of its citizens hold in common with peoples throughout the world, but also to respect the decisions and honour the UN and cooperate actively in the UN to this end.”⁸² The NCCW, founded specifically to “give Catholic women of the country a common voice and an instrument for collective action,” also heeded Schaefer’s call to write to local and state representatives to press for a favourable resolution. On 6 November, copies of the NCCW resolution were forwarded to President Truman, Secretary of State Dean Acheson and Warren Austin, head of the American delegation at the UN.⁸³ On the same day, the diocesan press reported on the urgent appeal

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ ‘National Council of Catholic Women Resolution: Internationalization of Jerusalem’, October 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Howard Carroll to Margaret Mealey, 6 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26; Margaret Mealey to Howard Carroll, 7 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

of the Paris-based *Comité de Sauvegarde des Lieux Saints* (Committee for the Safeguarding of the Holy Places) for the immediate implementation of the *corpus separatum*, reportage intended to highlight the international scope of Catholic appeals for Jerusalem.⁸⁴ The next week, Schaefer ordered translations of the French statement made for distribution to every delegation at the UN.⁸⁵ In thanking Schaefer for her efforts, the Committee's president, Comte de la Baume, assured her that the NCWC's efforts "were in perfect harmony with the appeal of the Catholics of France."⁸⁶

The American bishops, through the coordination of the NCWC, also stepped up their campaign in the fall of 1950. In October, the NCWC augmented its tack on internationalization by demanding that any loan from Washington to Tel Aviv be contingent upon Israel's acquiescence on the Jerusalem question. Based on information from Alexander Mombelli, the NCWC's correspondent in Jerusalem, that the Israeli state was "near bankruptcy", and that the American government was about to release a "multi-million dollar loan" to Tel Aviv, the bishops demanded that "the UN's plan for internationalization be a condition of American financial aid to the Israeli government."⁸⁷ The statement continued that "American Catholics do not want to be a party to an agreement which would thwart their deep interests in safeguarding the holiest Christian

⁸⁴ 'French Catholics Appeal to UN to Implement Its Jerusalem Stand', 6 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁸⁵ Catherine Schaefer to A. Vasnier, 10 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁸⁶ Comte de la Baume to Catherine Schaefer, 14 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁸⁷ Addendum- American Bishops Annual Statement for 1950, October 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

sites.” On 11 October, the statement was forwarded to Truman and to the American delegation at the UN.⁸⁸

The American bishops also sought to raise the issue as widely as possible throughout the dioceses as the General Assembly session drew near. In early November, the NCWC ordered the immediate distribution of a memo, composed by Schaefer, to the entire episcopate.⁸⁹ The document outlined the history of the Jerusalem question at the UN, emphasizing the Holy See’s unchanged position on internationalization, and was intended to serve as a template for sermons on the issue for the remaining Sundays of the month. On 17 November, Domenico Tardini thanked Schaefer for her efforts, confident that “the memo will serve to enlighten North American Catholics regarding the present state of the question, and the grave motives for which the Holy See has pronounced itself in favour of the true and proper internationalization of the City as the only means to save Jerusalem and the Holy Places in the present violent conflict between Arabs and Jews.”⁹⁰

This was augmented the same week by the translation and distribution, at the behest of Chicago’s Cardinal Samuel Stritch, of an *Osservatore Romano* editorial which re-stated the Holy See’s resolute position on the issue. Stritch wanted “the mind of the Holy See to be known in as many quarters as possible”, and urged the bishops to forward copies to all diocesan priests.⁹¹ He also requested that the NCWC “forward the piece to the secular press at the earliest moment” in an effort to make known “the authentic

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 2 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁹⁰ Domenico Tardini to Catherine Schaefer, 17 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

⁹¹ Frank A. Hall to Howard Carroll, 27 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

position of the Vatican with regard to the internationalization of the Jerusalem area.”⁹² In forwarding the editorial (which appeared in the *Osservatore Romano* on 29 November), Carroll further urged “their Excellencies to use whatever resources available to them to have the position of the Holy See widely and accurately understood.”⁹³

At the UN, Schaefer was tasked with keeping the NCWC, and by extension the Holy See, apprised of developments on the Jerusalem question. An off-the-record conversation with John Ross, the American representative on the Ad Hoc political committee that would consider the Jerusalem question, however, confirmed some of Schaefer’s longstanding apprehensions.⁹⁴ Ross reiterated to Schaefer the notion that the United States could only back a solution acceptable to Israel and Jordan. Though he favoured a scheme that would protect Christian, Jewish and Muslim shrines, he asserted that “it would be idle to think of any scheme of internationalization involving a *corpus separatum*.” “That is absolutely out of the question,” he emphasized, adding that he “had never trusted that scheme anyway” as it contained “that fancy Latin phrase.”⁹⁵

Given the diminishing hope that the American delegation would back a Jerusalem solution amenable to the Vatican and American Catholics, Schaefer attempted to determine where pockets of support for the *corpus separatum* did lie. On 13 November, she was informed by Iraq’s Dr. Faizal Jamali that the Arab nations which had firmly

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Howard Carroll to the Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Co-Adjutors and Auxiliaries of the United States, 22 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26. See also ‘I Cattolici per i Luoghi Santi’, *Osservatore Romano*, 29 November 1950, 1.

⁹⁴ Memorandum- Jerusalem and the Arab Refugees, 9 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

backed the scheme in 1949 would remain in support. On the same day, Cuba's Francisco Ichaso confirmed that the Latin American delegations which had supported the plan remained firm in their support. He added, confidentially, that "even Uruguay, which had campaigned violently against the resolution last year, would stand for territorial internationalization this year."⁹⁶ Specifically, Ichaso assured Schaefer that the Holy See could expect the support of Cuba, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, and El Salvador. Though the Soviet-Arab-Catholic bloc that had delivered the *corpus separatum* in 1949 was no longer, it appeared that core support among Arab and Catholic states remained firm. On 15 November, Schaefer apprised Carroll of these developments, which were forwarded to the apostolic delegate the following day.⁹⁷

On 7 December 1950, the General Assembly's Ad Hoc political committee began its review of the Jerusalem question. Central to the committee's objective was to devise a functioning agreement which reflected the realities in the city, and was acceptable to the world community. In short order, Sweden's Erik Boheman introduced a Swedish-Dutch proposal which amounted to a repudiation of the *corpus separatum*, proposing provisions to "ensure the international protection of the spiritual and religious interests of the world community."⁹⁸ In addition, it proposed a UN appointed commissioner to administer the Holy Places, though one who would be under the authority of the Israeli and Jordanian governments. In effect, the resolution amounted to a severe watering-down, if not recall, of the December 1949 General Assembly resolution, and represented a rejection of the

⁹⁶ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 13 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

⁹⁷ Howard Carroll to Amleto Cicognani, 18 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 23.

⁹⁸ United Nations General Assembly, 5th Session, Sweden: Draft Resolution, 5 December 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26: 1-8.

Vatican's designs for the city, which American Catholics had so faithfully advocated for nearly three years.

In the desperate days leading to a vote, American Catholic efforts to secure a *corpus separatum* reached a nadir. Catholic efforts in this crucial stretch were spurred further by the submission, on 29 November, of a petition from over one thousand American educators and Protestant seminary professors “instructing” the Truman administration, and the American delegation at the UN, to “take the initiative in settling the problem by international supervision of the Holy Places, leaving political sovereignty in the hands of the Israeli and Jordanian governments.”⁹⁹ In the same week, Schaefer ordered the translation and distribution of a pro-internationalization statement of Italian Catholic Action to UN delegations, both as a means of countering the ‘Protestant statement’ and of reiterating the Roman Catholic position on the question. She further assured the association’s president, Vittorio Veronese, that the statement would receive “maximum exposure” in the American diocesan press, which carried the statement widely during the week of 11 December.¹⁰⁰ The statement, along with that of the French Committee for the Safeguarding of the Holy Places, was also carried on NCWC radio broadcasts in the first weeks of December, in a bid to emphasize the international character of Roman Catholic demands for Jerusalem. In the same week Martin Work, national secretary of the NCCM, forwarded his organization’s petition to preserve the

⁹⁹ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 30 November 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

¹⁰⁰ Howard Carroll to Vittorio Veronese, 25 January 1951, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 27; See also ‘International Jerusalem Stand Reaffirmed by Italian Catholics in Message to UN Assembly Head’, 12 December 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 27.

territorial internationalization of Jerusalem to Dean Acheson and Warren Austin.¹⁰¹ In speaking for the “deepest interests and sentiment for the Holy Places shared by millions of co-religionists in the United States,” the brief statement clearly, if implicitly, linked the potential voting power of twenty million American Catholics with demands to preserve the *corpus separatum* for Jerusalem.¹⁰²

By 11 December, as the General Assembly entered the crucial week in deciding the fate of Jerusalem, open disapproval of the Swedish-Dutch resolution quickly emerged. Arab and ‘Catholic’ delegations, in particular, rightly regarded the plan as the death knell of the December 1949 agreement. Lebanon’s Dr. Charles Malik, who had carried the torch for Catholic interests on the floor of the General Assembly in 1949, again advocated for the preservation past resolutions on Jerusalem. On that Monday, Malik, at the request of his delegation, made two interventions against the Swedish-Dutch proposal, arguing that it essentially discarded the majority resolutions passed by the same assembly in 1947, 1948 and 1949. He was refuted by Israel’s Abba Eban, who urged delegates to accept the Swedish-Dutch proposal lest “the opportunity for any form of internationalization might pass.”¹⁰³ The following day Malik, who had assured Schaefer that he had a strategy “up his sleeve” for the General Assembly session, read into the record a number of statements which Schaefer had previously distributed to delegates through her office. These included the statements of the French Committee of the Safeguarding of the Holy Places as well as the *Osservatore Romano* editorial of 29

¹⁰¹ Martin Work to Howard Carroll, 12 December 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 26.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 11 December 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

November.¹⁰⁴ He further requested that the French statement be distributed as an official document of the General Assembly. In addition, Malik read into the record the *America* editorial of 17 June 1950 which had forcefully argued for a *corpus separatum* as the only means to preserve peace and stability in the region. In stressing that “religious interests had been overlooked in the political and national rivalries” in the city, he lamented the resulting “uneasy peace prevailing in Jerusalem and the whole of Palestine.”¹⁰⁵ Israel’s Eban, who had emerged as Malik’s adversary in these final days, offered a stern rebuttal, highlighting a multitude of Christian leaders who backed a “realistic approach” on Jerusalem. Eban specifically read into the record a statement of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem, who favoured the Swedish-Dutch proposal, as well as the American ‘Protestant statement’ of 30 November, which represented Episcopal, Methodist and Evangelical leaders.¹⁰⁶ He stated that “those who were interested in religious peace might well consider that [full internationalization] might well lead to religious schism and division.” He further deemed Malik’s position “wishful thinking,” and unreflective of “a general shift of opinion since 1948 and 1949.” “Let it be forever recorded that a practical solution (Sweden’s) came before the General Assembly in 1950 and Israel gave it support,” he concluded. “Historians will regard it as a turning point in history.”¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Memorandum- Jerusalem, 12 December 1950, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 38.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

Though the Swedish-Dutch resolution would, in short order, be relegated to the dustbin of history, the debate surrounding it did produce a Belgian resolution that sought to appease both supporters and detractors of the *corpus separatum*. Submitted on 12 December, the resolution called for the appointment of a four-person panel to consult with Israel, Jordan and other interested parties to ascertain “the conditions of settlement capable of ensuring the effective protection...of the Holy Places.”¹⁰⁸ The committee was to report its findings at the General Assembly’s Sixth Session the following year. Belgium also accepted, at the insistence of Malik and other members of the Lebanese delegation, an amendment which urged the committee to keep in mind the UN’s three successive resolutions on Jerusalem (all of which preserved territorial internationalization). Though the Belgian proposal didn’t assure the survival of the *corpus separatum*, it kept alive the possibility of its implementation at a later date, enough to give it support from Catholic quarters. On 13 December, the Ad Hoc Political Committee voted to adopt the Belgian proposal. As State Department files have revealed, Cardinal Spellman again played a role in last minute negotiations, urging a number of delegations to back the Belgian scheme, and “exerting a decisive influence against the Swedish draft resolution.”¹⁰⁹

The General Assembly voted on the Belgian resolution on 15 December. The results of the vote, which failed to produce the two-thirds majority required for adoption, revealed the entrenched clefs between those supporting and those opposing the *corpus separatum*. In the end, a large clutch of South American states (Chile, Colombia,

¹⁰⁸ Feintuch, *U.S. Policy on Jerusalem*, 100.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 101.

Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela) supported the proposal, evidence of the persistence of the ‘Catholic bloc’ on the Jerusalem question. France, which appeared non-committal in the final days, also supported the Belgian proposal. Though the American delegation voted against the resolution, Yossi Feintuch contends that the delegation’s position was strongly tempered by passions aroused by the question in the United States. As a result, the American delegation was reluctant to overtly back any plan “on a matter of such religious and emotional value,” fearing the domestic repercussions of any such stand. Acheson himself instructed John Ross to make no efforts to persuade other members to follow the American course “or to discourage a possible shift in the voting for the Belgian resolution.”¹¹⁰ If American Catholic pressure had not succeeded in securing American support for the Belgian proposal, it did appear to have dissuaded an activist stand by the delegation in support of the Swedish-Dutch proposal. Given the clout that the Americans wielded at the UN, such a clear stand might well have assured the victory of the Swedish-Dutch plan, ending any hope of a future implementation of the *corpus separatum*.

The defeat of the Belgian resolution produced a longstanding stalemate on the Jerusalem question at the UN. It also, in effect, marked the end of the active Roman Catholic lobby to secure territorial internationalization for the city. As Elihu Lauterpacht has observed, after the December 1950 vote, “the question of Jerusalem was conspicuous only by its absence from discussion at the UN.”¹¹¹ The status quo appeared acceptable to a majority of states if only because the *corpus separatum* had proved to be not practically

¹¹⁰ *Ibid*, 102.

¹¹¹ See Elihu Lauterpacht, *Jerusalem and the Holy Places* (London, 1968): 31.

implementable. As the deadlock dragged on, Israel moved to consolidate its official presence in the city. Following the 1950 decision to make the Holy City its capital, Israel announced plans to transfer its Foreign Ministry from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in May 1952. In July, an Israeli spokesman confirmed Tel Aviv's designs for the city, stating that Jerusalem "was, is and always will be the capital of Israel," calling the *corpus separatum* "impractical and unrealistic" and, for all intents and purposes, a "dead issue."¹¹² In November, upon the death of President Chaim Weizmann, the official residence of the President was also moved to Jerusalem, prompting Prime Minister Ben-Gurion to declare that "the status of Jerusalem now remains as settled as that of Rome or London."¹¹³ Rapid Israeli moves to consolidate an official presence in Jerusalem, noted a disconsolate Schaefer, "appeared to put internationalization further off than ever."¹¹⁴ In the winter of 1952, she also noted to Carroll that she was witnessing "the very death throes" of internationalization at the UN.¹¹⁵

Though the Vatican remained resolved to establishing an international Jerusalem, and the American bishops never relinquished their role as the primary advocates of such a policy, it was clear that by the winter of 1952-1953 that the issue had reached a deadening stalemate. Washington's acceptance of the status quo in Jerusalem, where Israel and Jordan had established a firm presence, dealt a fatal blow to any reversion to

¹¹² 'Israel to Build a Capital City in Jerusalem', Memo- NCWC Office for UN Affairs, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 44, File 28.

¹¹³ See 'Catholics Opposed Plan Periling Internationalization of Jerusalem', *Chicago Daily News*, 29 December 1952: 4.

¹¹⁴ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 21 February 1951, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 159, File 14.

¹¹⁵ Catherine Schaefer to Howard Carroll, 21 January 1952, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 40.

the November 1947 resolution. American support for the status quo, moreover, weakened the support of other states previously committed to *corpus separatum*. The Philippines, Mexico and Colombia, to name a few, appeared more anxious to stay onside with Washington as the Cold War congealed than to gain the good graces of the Vatican. Although a clutch of Arab states remained committed to the idea, they were increasingly “more interested in the repatriation of refugees than in the internationalization question,” as Schaefer reported in October 1952.¹¹⁶

For the remainder of the decade, the NCWC resigned itself to defending the rights of Roman Catholic access to Holy Sites in the territory. One of its more notable victories concerned the Carmelite Monastery in Haifa, which had been seized and occupied by the Israeli navy since 1951. Following “repeated rude rebuffs by the Israelis to the local superior,” the NCWC’s Legal Department took up the case in 1958 on behalf of the Vatican. Several months of intense negotiations, both with the State Department and with the Israeli government, yielded the withdrawal of the naval offices and an indemnification paid to the Carmelite Order.¹¹⁷ It was a small victory in a decade of rebuffs for the Vatican and the American Church.

McMahon continued until 1955 to work tirelessly in directing the significant financial and material aid collected by the CNEWA, which a November 1956 estimate placed at twenty-six million dollars in cash, goods and services since 1948. “More than half of the money,” the report noted, “was donated by American Catholics.” After 1951,

¹¹⁶ Memo- Jerusalem, 16 October 1952, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 164, File 40.

¹¹⁷ See Paul Tanner to Jacob Herzog, 7 April 1958, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 21, File 44; Chaim Wardie to Harmon Burns, 25 August 1958, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 21, File 44; Paul Tanner to Edward Mooney, 29 August 1958, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 21, File 44; Paul Tanner to Francis Spellman, 1 October 1958, NCWC/OGS/ACUA, Box 21, File 44.

however, the deadlock at the UN rendered his efforts on internationalization largely irrelevant. In late 1953, he compared the Vatican's feelings towards Israel's intransigence on Jerusalem to those of "a man looking into the window of his home to be told by intruders that he could have any compensation except the right of possession."¹¹⁸ It was a prophetic observation that revealed both the failure of the Vatican and the American Church to extract even their minimum demands on Palestine, as well as the enduring frictions between the new state and its oldest adversary, tensions which would decades yet to abate.

Conclusion

The publication of Robert F. Drinan S.J.'s *Honor the Promise: America's Commitment to Israel* in 1977 was emblematic of the sea-change in American Catholic attitudes towards Zionism and the state of Israel in the decades after the intense struggle for Jerusalem wound down in the mid 1950s.¹¹⁹ The weight of Christian responsibility and guilt for the Holocaust, contended Drinan, necessitated a new understanding between Christians and Jews, and a reparation that was "moral and material." This reparation, however, should not be motivated by feelings of guilt since this alone "would be an unhelpful basis for Christian-Jewish understanding." What was first required of all Christians, Drinan urged, "was a recognition of the righteousness of Zionism as the basis for the Jewish democratic state."¹²⁰ The Jesuit priest, Georgetown law professor and

¹¹⁸ Bialer, *Cross on the Star of David*, 29.

¹¹⁹ See Robert F. Drinan, *Honor the Promise: America's Commitment to Israel* (New York, 1977).

¹²⁰ See Joseph Constance, 'Rev. Robert F. Drinan and the Jewish Democratic State: Shaping Catholic Perspectives, 1970-1980. (Unpublished manuscript in the author's possession).

congressman had, in fact, been expressing such notions publically for over a decade. On the need for Roman Catholic acceptance of Zionism, he was unequivocal.

There is no doubt that Zionism as the basis for the establishment of a nation is unique in the annals of mankind. But so is the whole history of the Jewish people. Consequently, it is improper to adopt a procrustean attitude to insist that Israel conform to the usual model of a contemporary state...From the beginning, Judaism was conceived as the interlinking of a people, a Torah, a land. The Hebrew Scriptures, medieval and modern Jewish literature, the Talmud, and the Jewish liturgy is replete with the idea of a return to Zion...Zionism and Judaism have always been integral parts of each other. Since the Holocaust and the founding of Israel the inseparability of Judaism and Zionism has never been clearer.¹²¹

Though Drinan did not speak for the Vatican or for the American Episcopate on the issue, the lack of public rebuke from either body did signal the demise of the activist and near-monolithic Roman Catholic trans-nationalism that had characterized earlier periods. By the 1970s, it was evident that the ideological solidarity that had made the American Catholic Church such a valuable ally to Rome in the struggle for Palestine had run its course. Though many American bishops continued to adhere to the Vatican line on Israel and the Jerusalem question, the consensus of previous decades had been replaced by a plurality of nuanced views, which included outright support for Zionism and for the state of Israel.

The American Episcopal consensus that remained intact from the 1920s to the 1950s was weakened in subsequent decades by a number of factors, not least the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the great renewal movement in the Roman Catholic Church that was called by Pope John XIII in 1959. A number of American bishops took

¹²¹ Drinan, *Honor the Promise*, 121.

active roles at the Council, embracing its reformist zeal as evidenced by the promulgation of *Dignitatis Humanae*, a declaration on religious freedom conceived by John Courtney Murray and tabled by Archbishops Albert Meyer of Chicago and Joseph Ritter of St. Louis. Though Cardinal Spellman loomed large at the Council, and was undoubtedly the leader of the ‘conservative’ faction of American bishops, there emerged in Rome a growing faction of liberal-minded bishops, which included Meyer and Ritter as well as Detroit’s John Dearden and Kansas City’s John Patrick Cody, who more openly took up the Council’s mandate of revival and renewal. The post-Conciliar period, in fact, revealed a growing divide among ‘conservative’ and ‘liberal’ bishops in the United States on issues such as the Vietnam War, disarmament, contraception and the role of women in the Church. The near-monolithic American Church of the pre-Conciliar period had, by the late 1960s, given way to a plurality of views on a number of questions relevant to the Vatican and the international Roman Catholic Church, including, as Drinan’s work reveals, on Israel and Zionism.

The Second Vatican Council was also significant, moreover, for the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate*, a declaration on the relationship of the Roman Catholic Church with non-Christian religions. Notable was the fourth section, which dealt specifically with Judaism. It repudiated the centuries-old charge of deicide against the Jews, and stressed the religious and spiritual bonds shared by the faiths, reaffirming the eternal covenant between God and the people of Israel. It further dismissed the Catholic objective of trying to convert the Jews, a symbolic turning point if juxtaposed with Pope Pius X’s 1904 warning to Theodor Herzl that should the Jews return to Palestine, there would be “Catholic priests waiting there to baptize them all.” For the first time in history, *Nostra*

Aetate called for Catholics and Jews to engage in friendly dialogue and theological discussion to better understand each other's faiths. After intense debate, the declaration was adopted by the world's cardinals and bishops on 28 November 1965, a definitive turning point in the history of Catholic-Jewish relations. The conceptual underpinnings of Drinan's work in the 1970s, and the Vatican's diplomatic recognition of the state of Israel in 1993, could definitively be traced back to the seminal shift in Catholic-Jewish relations initiated by *Nostra Aetate*.

For nearly three decades between the 1920s and the 1950s, however, the Vatican could faithfully rely on the American Catholic Church, and particularly its bishops, to transmit uniquely Roman Catholic ideologies and policies to the most powerful nation in the world. As Peter D'Agostino has skilfully demonstrated, this Roman Catholic trans-nationalism manifested itself in the 1920s in the attitudes and opinions of American Catholics on the Roman Question (where American Catholics supported the creation of a sovereign territory for the papacy in Italy), and on Mussolini's Fascist regime, when many Catholics, particularly Italian-Americans, expressed open sympathy. Mussolini's success in resolving the 'Roman Question' by granting the papacy sovereignty in the Vatican City in 1929 only increased his allure in American Catholic circles. In the 1930s, this trans-national relationship between the papacy and American Catholics congealed into a defined political lobby, when the American bishops, organized through the National Catholic Welfare Conference (NCWC), represented papal interests vis-à-vis Washington on Mexican anticlericalism, the Italo-Ethiopian War and the Spanish Civil War. As in the case of American Catholic sympathy for Mussolini and Italian Fascism, these positions created frictions with non-Catholics, and clearly delineated the Roman

sources of American Catholic policy. Also emerging in the 1930s was a rising chorus of American Catholic opposition to political Zionism, another position that appeared to take its inspiration directly from Rome, and which placed Catholics at odds with their Jewish fellow citizens.

The growing political stridency of the American bishops, as outlined in chapter one, was girded by a number of factors in the interwar decades. The organization of a bishops conference in 1920, the NCWC, undoubtedly provided an organizational nerve-centre through which the episcopate could more concertedly, and forcefully, express a collective political will. The exponential growth of the Church, owing to migration and high birthrates, particularly in the northeast, facilitated a rapid institutional expansion in the interwar years, when Catholic schools, hospitals and colleges, not to mention new parishes, were built to accommodate this burgeoning population. The genuinely warm relationship between President Roosevelt and leading American bishops was further evidence of the growing clout of American Catholics. The Vatican, on its part, was clearly cognizant of the growing power of the American Church, and from the early 1920s on sought to strengthen its ties with the American episcopate. In addition to its growing political influence, the Vatican was aware of the significant financial clout of the American Church, as evidenced by the vast sums raised in the United States for the Papal Relief Mission to Moscow between 1922 and 1924. The ceding of perpetual control over the CNEWA to the Archbishop of New York in 1931 can directly be traced to the fundraising capacity of American Catholics. Roosevelt's appointment of Myron Taylor as his 'personal representative' to the Holy See on the eve of the Second World War

appeared to cement the informal, yet ideologically cohesive, tripartite alliance of the Vatican, American Catholics and Washington.

Upon the American entry into the war in 1941, American Catholics heeded the call to duty issued by the bishops, who had abandoned isolationist leanings to wholly endorse the war effort. The course of the war, however, revealed the extent to which the bishops continued to “toe the Roman line,” actively in their protests of the allied bombing of Rome, and passively in their adherence to the established Vatican position on Zionism. Both from the Vatican and from the various organs of the American Catholic Church there emerged a distinctly dual response to the tragedy of Europe’s Jews. On the one hand, expressions of sympathy for the Jewish plight were expressed both by Rome and the American bishops. American Catholics, in fact, expressed their revulsion at the Nazi persecution of Jews in particularly poignant and clear language, surpassing the Vatican’s restrained expressions of sympathy and solidarity. On the substantive question of Jewish emigration to Palestine, and the creation of a Hebrew national home there, however, the American bishops remained resolutely in line with Rome. It was a policy that withstood the full airing of the tragedy of the Holocaust, and which stood firm against the rising tide of sympathy for Zionism in the United States, not just among Jews but among a growing segment of American Protestant Churches, Congress and even the Truman White House. Open expressions of sympathy for Zionism from the American bishops, in contrast, were virtually non-existent. When nonconformity did surface, as the case of New Orleans’ Archbishop Joseph Rummel illustrated, it was quickly suppressed, further evidence of the unanimity the Vatican expected from the American episcopate.

In the postwar years, as the Palestine question reached its most crucial phase, the American bishops adhered staunchly to papal opposition to the creation of a Jewish home in the Holy Land. At the root of this stance continued to lay an ancestral Roman Catholic refusal to yield the territory of Christ's birth, life and death to a faith and a people that it continued to hold responsible for deicide, an idea expressed clearly and consistently by American Catholic leaders after 1945. Catholic leaders in the United States, in fact, emerged as committed opponents of Zionism in an atmosphere of rising sympathy for that very cause. On this question the bishops, the diocesan press, independent Catholic journals, religious orders and a range of lay Catholic organizations exhibited a remarkable consensus, evidence of a resilient position on the Palestine question that clearly took its inspiration from the Vatican. The dearth of dissenting voices in the American Catholic Church only underscored the monolithic unanimity of American Catholic attitudes.

In this study, I have argued that not only did the various organs of the American Catholic Church support the papal position on Palestine, but also that Catholic leaders in the United States emerged as the primary advocates of this Vatican policy in the first decade of the Cold War. A number of factors placed American Catholics at the forefront of this Roman Catholic transnational lobby attempting to shape developments on the Holy Land. The withering of the British mandate for the territory after 1945, and the passing of the question to the UN made the United States the hub of the debate on the future of Palestine. The close ties of leading American bishops to the American government, the Vatican surmised, endowed them with a unique ability to transmit papal policy to the most powerful capital in the world. As both patriotic Americans and loyal

Roman Catholics, these figures brought a distinctive pressure to bear on Washington. Ideological affinities between Washington and the Vatican in the early postwar years, moreover, also raised hopes that the efforts of the American bishops on Palestine would bear fruit. Transnational Catholic unanimity on the Palestine question, of course, girded this international Catholic lobby led by the American Church.

That this transnational lobby was unable, ultimately, to secure its demands spoke volumes on the limits of Vatican diplomacy in the early Cold War. Despite musings on the nefarious politicking of the Vatican and its international bishops by polemicists such as Paul Blanshard, Pierre Van Paassen and Avro Manhattan, the Roman Catholic lobby was not able to claim any definitive victories on Palestine. From a policy of opposing the very creation of a Jewish state in the Holy Land, to strenuously advocating for an internationalized zone encompassing Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth, to finally demanding the working establishment of a circumscribed *corpus separatum* for Jerusalem's 'Old City', Roman Catholic labours came to naught. Several factors militated against these efforts. The Vatican and American Catholic were met by a well-orchestrated and funded American Zionist lobby, which gradually gained the support of a number of mainstream Protestant Churches. The Holocaust itself, though not altering the Vatican's position, had also created a compelling logic for a Jewish state, and a significant groundswell of public support for Zionism among non-Catholics. Even Vatican demands for a functioning internationalization of Jerusalem, promised by three successive UN resolutions, met the reticence of the Truman administration. American troops needed to secure the city, along with the funds required to maintain such a force, was enough to give Truman and the American delegation to the UN pause. Finally, the fickle support of

a number of majority-Catholic states at the UN, eager to remain onside with the United States on Israel, ultimately stalled the creation of a *corpus separatum* for Jerusalem.

The American Catholic lobby on Palestine could, in retrospect, be credited with some modest victories. As this study has outlined, and as recent research by Uri Bialer has corroborated, the nascent Israeli state did consider the Vatican's efforts, and particularly the American Catholic lobby, as threatening to its interests. As a result, Israeli policymakers tried earnestly to forge a Jerusalem solution acceptable to the Vatican. Tel Aviv also encouraged, and funded, an American Zionist counter-lobby to blunt criticisms of Israel in the American diocesan press, which were considered detrimental to its reputation at the UN. Intense American Catholic lobbying also shaped the guarded and prudent Jerusalem policy of Warren Austin and the American delegation to the UN. Though Austin's delegation never cast a vote in favour of territorial internationalization, it was instructed not to counsel other delegations on the question, or to trumpet its policy too loudly. The divisiveness of the question in the United States, documents reveal, was at the root of this circumspection. Vocal disapproval of the scheme from Austin might have sunk the *corpus separatum* much sooner, but intense Catholic lobbying managed to make the question politically volatile for Truman. As a result of American discretion, then, the Jerusalem question remained theoretically 'in play' at the UN into the 1950's.

In the final analysis, however, it was, as Peter C. Kent has suggested, a "lonely Cold War" for the Vatican and the international Roman Catholic Church, as the case of Palestine illustrated. Though the transnational consensus on the Holy Land between Rome and its American Church remained firm, the American bishops and the various

organs of the American Catholic Church could not even secure the most modest of the Vatican's demands. The ideological transnationalism observed by Peter D'Agostino on the Roman Question and Italian Fascism remained vigorous through the first decade of the Cold War, as the robust American Catholic lobby on Palestine attested. It was, however, to be the last stand of such a monolithic Catholic lobby. The Second Vatican Council, and its promulgation of *Nostra Aetate*, would herald the beginning of a new era both in relations between Catholicism and Judaism and, by extension, between the Vatican and Israel. The Council, moreover, would unleash a plurality of views in the Church that would preclude the survival of such a monolithic transnationalism. Consensus on issues such as disarmament, peace, and ecumenism only served to draw the Vatican and international Roman Catholics closer to faith groups, including Jews and Protestants, who sought similar ends.

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Lecturer, Department of History
King's University College
London, Ontario, Canada (2011-2012)

Lecturer, Department of History
Huron University College
London, Ontario, Canada (2011-2012)

Professor, School of Liberal Studies
Seneca College
Toronto, Ontario, Canada (2011)

Lecturer, Department of Religious Studies
King's University College
London, Ontario, Canada (2009-2010)

Teaching Assistant, Department of History
University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada (2005-2008)

Teaching Assistant, Department of History
University of New Brunswick
Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada (2003-2005)

Awards, Scholarships and Grants: Seneca College Faculty Research Grant (2011)

Ontario Graduate Scholarship (2009-10)

Harris-Steele Research Grant (2009-10)

Ontario Graduate Scholarship (2008-09)

Harris Steele Research Grant (2009-10)

Faculty of Social Science Research Grant (2008-09)

Faculty of Social Science Research Grant (2007-08)

Faculty of Graduate Studies Student
Teaching Award (2005-2006)

Gale-Shaw Memorial Prize (2004-2005)

Publications:

“An Imperialist Irishman: Bishop Michael Fallon, The Diocese of London and the Great War” *Historical Studies* (Volume 74, 2008), pp. 73-94.

“Vatican and Ottawa make natural allies” *National Post*, 10 November 2009.