

Look Magazine's  
"How The Jews  
Changed  
Catholic Thinking"

By Joseph Roddy, Look Senior Editor  
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For the simple tenets of their faith, most Roman Catholics rely on the catechism's hard questions and imprimated answers. Children in Church schools memorize its passages, which they rarely forget the rest of their lives. In the catechism, they learn that Catholic dogma does not change and, far more vividly, that Jews killed Jesus Christ. Because of that Christian concept, for the past 20 centuries anti-Semitism spread as a kind of social disease on the body of mankind. Its incidence rose and fell, but anti-Semites were never quite out of style. The ill-minded who argued all other matters could still join in contempt for Jews. It was a gentlemen's agreement that carried into Auschwitz.

Few Catholics were ever directly taught to hate Jews. Yet Catholic teaching could not get around the New Testament account that Jews provoked the Crucifixion. The gas chambers were only the latest proof that they had not yet been pardoned. The best hope that the Church of Rome will not again seem an accomplice to genocide is the fourth chapter of its Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, which Pope Paul VI declared Church law near the end of Vatican Council II. At no place in his address from the Chair of Peter did the Pope talk of Jules Isaac. But perhaps the archbishop of Aix, Charles de Provenchres, had made Isaac's role perfectly clear some few years earlier. "It is a sign of the times," the Archbishop said, "that a layman, and a Jewish layman at that, has become the originator of a Council decree."

Jules Isaac was a history scholar, a Legion of Honor member, and the inspector of schools in France. In 1943, he was 66, a despairing man living near Vichy, when the Germans picked up his daughter and wife. From then on, Isaac could think of little but the apathy of the Christian world before the fate of incinerated Jews. His book *Jesus and Israel* was published in 1948, and after reading it, Father Paul Dimann in Paris searched schoolbooks and verified Isaac's sad claim that inadvertently, if not by intent, Catholics taught contempt for Jews. Gregory Baum, an Augustinian priest born an Orthodox Jew, called it "a moving account of the love which Jesus had for his people, the Jews, and of the contempt which the Christians, later, harbored for them."

Isaac's book was noticed. In 1949, Pope Pius XII received its author briefly. But 11 years went by before Isaac saw real hope. In Rome, in mid-June, 1960, the French Embassy pressed Isaac on to the Holy See. Isaac wanted to see John XXIII. He was passed from the old Cardinal Eugene Tisserant to the archconservative Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani. Ottaviani sent him on to the 83-year-old Cardinal Andrea Jullien, who stared without seeing and stayed motionless as stone while Isaac told how Catholic teaching led to anti-Semitism. When he had finished, he waited for a reaction, but Jullien stayed in stone. Isaac, who was hard of hearing, stared intently at the prelate's lips. Time passed, neither spoke. Isaac thought of just leaving, then decided to intrude. "But whom should I see about this terrible thing?" he asked, finally, and after another long pause, the old Cardinal said, "Tisserant." The silence settled in again. The next word was, "Ottaviani." Isaac shook that off too. When it was time for another, the word was, "Bea." With that, Jules Isaac went to Augustin Bea, the one German Jesuit in the College of Cardinals. "In him, I found powerful support," Isaac said.

The next day, the support was even stronger. John XXIII, standing in the doorway of the fourth-floor papal apartment, reached for Jules Isaac's hand, then sat beside him. "I introduced myself as a non-Christian, the promoter of l'Amicitia Judio-Christiannes, and a very deaf old man," Isaac said. John talked for a while of his devotion to the Old Testament, told of his days as a Vatican diplomat in France, then asked where his caller was born. Here, Isaac felt a rambling chat with the Supreme Pontiff coming on and started worrying about how he would ever bring the conversation around to his subject. He told John that his actions had kindled great hopes in the people of the Old Testament, and added: "Is not the Pope himself, in his great kindness, responsible for it if we now expect more?" John laughed, and Isaac had a listener. The non-Christian beside the Pope said the Vatican should study anti-Semitism. John said he had been thinking about that from the beginning of their talk. "I asked if I might take away some sparks of hope," Isaac recalled. John said he had a right to more than hope and then went on about the limits of sovereignty. "I am the head, but I must consult others too.... This is not monarchie absolue!" To much of the world, it seemed to be monarchy benevolent. Because of John, a lot was happening fast in Catholicism and Jewry.

A few months before Isaac spelled out his case against the Gentiles, a Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity was set up by Pope John under Cardinal Bea. It was to press toward reunion with the churches Rome lost at the Reformation. After Isaac left, John made it clear to the administrators in the Vatican's Curia that a firm condemnation of Catholic anti-Semitism was to come from the council he had called. To John, the German Cardinal seemed the right legislative whip for the job, even if his Christian Unity secretariat seemed a vexing address to work from.

By then, there was a fair amount of talk passing between the Vatican Council offices and Jewish groups, and both the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith were heard loud and clear in Rome. Rabbi Abraham J. Heschel of New York's Jewish Theological Seminary, who first knew of Bea in Berlin 30 years ago, met with the Cardinal in Rome. Bea had already read the American Jewish Committee's *The Image of the Jews in Catholic Teaching*. It was followed by another AJC paper, the 23-page study, *Anti-Jewish Elements in Catholic Liturgy*. Speaking for the AJC, Heschel said he hoped the Vatican Council would purge Catholic teaching of all suggestions that the Jews were a cursed race. And in doing that, Heschel felt, the Council should in no way exhort Jews to become Christians. About the same time, Israel's Dr. Nahum Goldmann, head of the World Conference of Jewish Organizations, whose members ranged in creed from the most orthodox to liberal, pressed its aspirations on the Pope. B'nai B'rith wanted the Catholics to delete all language from the Church services that could even seem anti-Semitic. Not then, nor in any time to come, would that be a simple thing to do.

The Catholic liturgy, where it was drawn from writings of the early Church Fathers, could easily be edited. But not the Gospels. Even if Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were better at evangelism than history, their writings were divinely inspired, according to Catholic dogma, and about as easy to alter as the center of the sun. That difficulty put both Catholics with the very best intentions and Jews with the deepest understanding of Catholicism in a theological fix. It also brought out the conservative opposition in the

Church and, to some extent, Arab anxieties in the Mideast. The conservative charge against the Jews was that they were deicides, guilty of killing God in the human-divine person of Christ. And to say now that they were not deicides was to say by indirection that Christ was not God, for the fact of the execution on Calvary stood unquestioned in Catholic theology. Yet the execution and the religion of those demanding it were the reasons Jews were “God-killers” and “Christ-killers” in the taunts of anti-Semites. Clearly, then, Catholic Scripture would be at issue if the council spoke about deicides and Jews. Wise and long-mitred heads around the Curia warned that the bishops in council should not touch this issue with ten-foot staffs. But still there was John XXIII, who said they must.

If the inviolability of Holy Writ was most of the problem in Rome, the rest was the Arab-Israeli war. Ben-Gurion’s Israel, in the Arab League’s view, like Mao’s China in the world out of Taiwan, really does not exist. Or, it only exists as a bone in the throat of Nasser. If the Council were to speak out for the Jews, then the spiritual order would seem political to Arab bishops. Next, there would be envoys passing in the night between the Vatican and Tel Aviv. This was a crisis the Arab League thought it might handle by diplomacy. Unlike Israel, its states already had some ambassadors to the papal court. They would bear the politest of reminders to the Holy See that some 2,756,000 Roman Catholics lived in Arab lands and mention the 420,000 Orthodox Catholics separated from Rome, whom the Papacy hoped to reclaim. Bishops of both cuts of Catholicism could be counted on to convey their interests to the Holy See. It was too soon for the threats. Instead, the Arabs importuned Rome to see that they were neither anti-Semitic nor anti-Jewish. Arabs, too, are Semites, they said, and among them lived thousands of Jewish refugees. Patriotic Arabs were just anti-Zionist because to them, Zionism was a plot to set a Judaic state in the center of Islam.

In Rome, the word from the Mideast and the conservatives was that a Jewish declaration would be inopportune. From the West, where 225,500 more Jews live in New York than in Israel, the word was that dropping the declaration would be a calamity. And into this impasse came the ingenuous bulk of John XXIII - not to settle the dispute but to enlarge it. Quite on his own, the Pope was toying with an idea, which the Roman Curia found grotesque, that non-Catholic faiths should send observers to the Council. The prospect of being invited caused no crisis among Protestants, but it plainly nonplussed the Jews. To attend suggested to some Jews that Christian theology concerned them. But to stay away when invited might suggest that the Jews did not really care whether Catholics came to grips with anti-Semitism.

When it was learned that Bea’s declaration, set for voting at the first Council session, carried a clear refutation of the decide charge, the World Jewish Congress let it be known around Rome that Dr. Haim Y. Vardi, an Israeli, would be an unofficial observer at the Council. The two reports may not have been related, but still they seemed to be. Because of them, other reports-louder ones-were heard. The Arabs complained to the Holy See. The Holy See said no Israeli had been invited. The Israelis denied then that an observer had been named. The Jews in New York thought an American should observe. In Rome, it all ended up with a jiggering of the agenda to make sure that the declaration would not come to the Council floor that session. Still, for the bishops, there was quite a bit of

supplementary reading on Jews. Some agency close enough to the Vatican to have the addresses in Rome of the Council's 2,200 visiting cardinals and bishops, supplied each with a 900-page book, *Il Complotto contro la Chiesa* (The Plot Against the Church) In it, among reams of scurrility, was a kind of fetching shred of truth. Its claim that the Church was being infiltrated by Jews would intrigue anti-Semites. For, in fact, ordained Jews around Rome working on the Jewish declaration included Father Baum, as well as Msgr. John Oesterreicher, on Bea's staff at the Secretariat. Bea, himself, according to the Cairo daily, *Al Gomhuria*, was a Jew named Behar.

Neither Baum nor Oesterreicher was with Bea in the late afternoon on March 31, 1963, when a limousine was waiting for him outside the Hotel Plaza in New York. The ride ended about six blocks away, outside the offices of the American Jewish Committee. There, a latter-day Sanhedrin was waiting to greet the head of the Secretariat for Christian Unity. The gathering was kept secret from the press. Bea wanted neither the Holy See nor the Arab League to know he was there to take questions the Jews wanted to hear answered. "I am not authorized to speak officially," he told them. "I can, therefore, speak only of what, in my opinion, could be effected, indeed, should be effected, by the Council." Then, he spelled out the problem. "In round terms" he said, "the Jews are accused of being guilty of deicide, and on them is supposed to lie a curse." He countered both charges. Because even in the accounts of the Evangelists, only the leaders of the Jews then in Jerusalem and a very small group of followers shouted for the death sentence on Jesus, all those absent and the generations of Jews unborn were not implicated in deicide in any way, Bea said. As to the curse, it could not condemn the crucifiers anyway, the Cardinal reasoned, because Christ's dying words were a prayer for their pardon. The Rabbis in the room wanted to know then if the declaration would specify deicide, the curse and the rejection of the Jewish people by God as errors in Christian teaching. Implicit in their question was the most touchy problem of the New Testament. Bea's answer was oblique. He cautioned his listeners that an unwieldy assemblage of bishops could not possibly get down to details, could only set guidelines, and hope not to make the complex seem simple. "Actually," he went on, "it is wrong to seek the chief cause of anti-Semitism in purely religious sources - in the Gospel accounts, for example. These religious causes, in so far as they are adduced (often they are not), are often merely an excuse and a veil to cover over other more operative reasons for enmity." Cardinal and rabbis joined in a toast with sherry after the talk, and one asked the prelate about Monsignor Oesterreicher, whom many Jews regard as too missionary with them. "You know, Eminence," a Jewish reporter once told Bea, "Jews do not regard Jewish converts as their best friends." Bea answered gravely, "Not our Jews."

Not long after that, the Rolf Hochhuth play *The Deputy* opened, to depict Pius XII as the Vicar of Christ who fell silent while Hitler went to The Final Solution. From the pages of the Jesuit magazine *America*, Oesterreicher talked straight at the AJC and B'nai B'rith. "Jewish human-relations agencies," he wrote, "will have to speak out against *The Deputy* in unmistakable terms. Otherwise they will defeat their own purpose." In the *Table of London*, Giovanni Battista Montini, the archbishop of Milan, wrote an attack on the play as a defense of the Pope, whose secretary he had been. A few months later, Pope John XXIII was dead, and Montini became Pope Paul VI.

At the second session of the Council, in the fall of 1963, the Jewish declaration came to the bishops as Chapter 4 of the larger declaration On Ecumenism. The Chapter 5 behind it was the equally troublesome declaration on religious liberty. Like riders to bills in congress, each of the disputed chapters was a wayward caboose hooked to the new ecumenical train. Near the end of the session, when On Ecumenism came up for a vote, the Council moderators decided the voting should cover only the first three chapters. That switched the cabooses to a siding and averted a lot of clatter in a council trying hard to be ecumenical. Voting on the Jews and religious liberty would follow soon, the bishops were promised. And while waiting around, they could read *The Jews and the Council in the Light of Scripture and Tradition* which was shorter, but more scurrilous than *Il Complotto*. But the second session ended without the vote on the Jews or religious liberty, and on a distinctly sour note, despite the Pope's announced visit to the Holy Land. That pilgrimage would take up a lot of newsprint, but still leave room for questions about votes that vanished. "Something had happened behind the scenes," the voice of the National Catholic Welfare Conference wrote. "[It is] one of the mysteries of the second session."

Two very concerned Jewish gentlemen who had to reflect hard on such mysteries were 59-year-old Joseph Lichten of B'nai B'rith's Anti-Defamation League in New York, and Zachariah Shuster, 63, of the American Jewish Committee. Lichten, who lost his parents, wife and daughter in Buchenwald, and Shuster, who also lost some of his closest relatives, had been talking with bishops and their staff men in Rome. The two lobbyists were not, however, seeing a lot of one another over vin rosso around St. Peter's. The strongest possible Jewish declaration was their common cause, but each wanted his home office to have credit for it. That is, of course, if the declaration was really strong. But until then, each would offer himself to the American hierarchs as the best barometer in Rome of Jewish sentiment back home.

To find out how the Council was going, many U.S. bishops in Rome depended on what they read in the New York Times. And so did the AJC and B'nai B'rith. That paper was the place to make points. Lichten thought Shuster was a genius at getting space in it, but less than deeply instructed in theology. Which is just about the way Shuster saw Lichten. Neither had much time for Frith Becker. Becker was in Rome for the World Jewish Congress, as its spokesman who sought no publicity and got little. The WJC, according to Becker, was interested in the Council, but not in trying to shape it. "We don't have the American outlook," he said, "on the importance of getting into print."

Getting into print was even beginning to look good to the Vatican. Yet an expert at the public relations craft would say the Holy See showed inexperience in the Holy Land. When Paul prayed with the bearded Orthodox Patriarch Athenagora in the Jordanian sector, the visit looked very good. Yet when he crossed over to Israel, he had cutting words about the author of *The Deputy* and a conversionist sermon for the Jews. His stay was so short that he never publicly uttered the name of the young country he was visiting in. Vaticanologists studying his moves thought they saw lessened hope for the declaration on the Jews.

Things looked better at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York. There, at a Beth Israel Hospital anniversary, guests learned that, years earlier, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver had told Cardinal Francis Spellman of Israel's efforts to get a seat in the United Nations. To help, Spellman said he would call on South American governments and share with them his fond wish that Israel be admitted. About the same time, il Papa americana told an AJC meeting it was "absurd to maintain that there is some kind of continuing guilt." In Pittsburgh, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum of the AJC spoke to the Catholic Press Association about the deicide charge, and the editorial response was abundant. In Rome, six AJC members had an audience with the Pope, and one of them, Mrs. Leonard M. Sperry, had just endowed the Sperry Center for Intergroup Cooperation at Pro Deo University in the Holy City. The Pope told his callers he agreed with all Cardinal Spellman had said about Jewish guilt. Vaticanologists could not help but reverse their reading and see a roseate future for the declaration.

Then came the New York Times. On June 12, 1964, it reported that the denial of deicide had been cut from the latest draft of the declaration. At the Secretariat for Christian Unity, a spokesman said only that the text had been made stronger. But that is not the way most Jews read it, nor a great many Catholics. Before the Council met and while the text was still sub secreto, whole sections of it turned up one morning in the New York Herald Tribune. No mention of the deicide charge was to be found. Instead, there was a clear call for the ecumenical spirit to extend itself because "the union of the Jewish people with the Church is a part of the Christian hope." Among the few Jews who did not mind reading that were Lichten and Shuster. They could look at it professionally. It read, say, much better over coffee in a morning paper than it would if the Pope were promulgating it as Catholic teaching. On other Jews, its effect was galvanic. Their disappointment set off indignation among some American bishops, and Lichten and Shuster appreciated their concern. Chances that a deicideless declaration, with a built-in conversion clause, would ever get by the American bishops and cardinals at the Council were what a couple of good lobbyists might call slim.

About two weeks before that, Msgr. George Higgins of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in Washington, D.C., helped arrange a papal audience for UN Ambassador Arthur J. Goldberg, who was a Supreme Court Justice at the time. Rabbi Heschel briefed Goldberg before the Justice and the Pope discussed the declaration. Cardinal Richard Cushing, in Boston, wanted to help too. Through his aide in Rome, the Cardinal set up an audience with the Pope for Heschel, whose apprehensions had reason to exceed Cushing's. With the AJC's Shuster beside him, Heschel talked hard about deicide and guilt, and asked the Pontiff to press for a declaration in which Catholics would be forbidden to proselytize Jews. Paul, somewhat affronted, would in no way agree. Shuster, somewhat chagrined, disassociated himself gingerly from Heschel by switching to French, which the Pope speaks but the Rabbi does not. All agree that the audience did not end as cordially as it began. Only Heschel and a few others think it did good. He invited notice in an Israeli paper that the declaration's next text had emerged free of conversionary tone. To the AJC, that interview was one more irritant. The Rabbi's audience with Paul in the Vatican, like Bea's meeting with the AJC in New York, was granted on the condition that it would be kept secret. It was undercover summit

conferences of that sort that led conservatives to claim that American Jews were the new powers behind the Church.

But on the floor of the Council, things looked even worse to the conservatives. There, it seemed to them as if Catholic bishops were working for the Jews. At issue was the weakened text. The cardinals from St. Louis and Chicago, Joseph Ritter and the late Albert Meyer, demanded a return to the strong one. Cushing said the deicide denial would have to be put back. Bishop Steven Leven of San Antonio called for clearing the text of conversionary pleas and , unknowingly, uttered a prophetic view about deicide. “We must tear this word out of the Christian vocabulary,” he said, “so that it may never again be used against the Jews.”

All that talk brought out the Arab bishops. They argued that a declaration favoring Jews would expose Catholics to persecution as long as Arabs fought Israelis. Deicide, inherited guilt and conversionary locutions seemed like so many debating points to most Arabs. They wanted no declaration at all, they kept saying, because it would be put to political use against them. Their allies in this holy war were conservative Italians, Spaniards and South Americans. They saw the structure of the faith being shaken by theological liberals who thought Church teaching could change. To the conservatives, this was near-heresy, and to the liberals, it was pure faith. Beyond faith, the liberals had the votes, and sent the declaration back to its Secretariat for more strength. While it was out for redrafting again, the conservatives wanted it flattened into one paragraph in the Constitution of the Church. But when the declaration reappeared at the third session’s end, it was in a wholly new document called The Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions. In that setting, the bishops approved it with a 1,770 to 185 vote. There was considerable joy among Jews in the United States because their declaration had finally come out.

In fact, it had not. The vote had been an endorsement only for the general substance of the text. But because votes with qualifications were accepted (*placet iuxta modum* is the Latin term for “yes, but with this modification”), the time between the third session and the fourth - just finished - would be spent fitting in the modifying *modi*, or those most of the 31 voting members of the Secretariat thought acceptable. By Council rules, *modi* could qualify or nuance the language, but they could not change the substance of the text. But then, what substance is or is not had always kept philosophers on edge. And theologians have had trouble with it too.

But first there were less recondite troubles to face. In Segni, near Rome, Bishop Luigi Carli wrote in the February, 1965 issue of his diocesan magazine that the Jews of Christ’s time and their descendants down to the present were collectively guilty of Christ’s death. A few weeks later, on Passion Sunday, at an outdoor Mass in Rome, Pope Paul talked of the Crucifixion and the Jews’ heavy part in it. Rome’s chief rabbi, Elio Toaff, said in saddened reply that in “even the most qualified Catholic personalities, the imminence of Easter causes prejudices to reemerge.”

On April 25, 1965, the New York Times correspondent in Rome, Robert C. Doty, upset just about everybody. The Jewish declaration was in trouble was the gist of his story

reporting that the Pope had turned it over to four consultants to clear it of its contradictions to Scripture and make it less objectionable to Arabs. It was about as refuted as a Times story ever gets. When Cardinal Bea arrived in New York three days later, he had his priest- secretary deny Doty's story by saying that his Secretariat for Christian Unity still had full control of the Jewish declaration. Then came an apology for Paul's sermon. "Keep in mind that the Pope was speaking to ordinary and simple faithful people - not before a learned body," the priest said. As to the anti- Semitic Bishop of Segni, the Cardinal's man said that Carli's views were definitely not those of the Secretariat. Morris B. Abram of the AJC was at the airport to greet Bea and found his secretary's views on that reassuring.

In Rome a few days later, some fraction of the Secretariat met to vote on the bishops' suggested modi. Among them were a few borne down from the fourth floor of the Vatican over the signature of the Bishop of Rome. It is not known for certain whether that special bishop urged that the "guilty of deicide" denial be cut. But the alternate possibility that the phrase would have been cut, if he had wanted it kept, is not pondered on much any more. Accounts of the Secretariat's struggles over deicide agree that it was a very close vote after a long day's debate. After deicide went out, there remained the Bishop of Rome's suggestion that the clause beginning "deplores, indeed condemns, hatred and persecution of Jews" might read better with "indeed condemns" left out. That would leave hatred and persecution of Jews still "deplored." The suggestion stirred no debate and was quickly accepted by vote. It was late, and nobody cared to fuss any more about little things.

That meeting was from May 9 to 15, and during that week, the New York Times had a story every other day from the Vatican. On May 8, the Secretariat denied again that outsiders were taking a hand in the Jewish declaration. On the 11th, President Charles Helou of Lebanon, an Arab Maronite Catholic, had an audience with the Pope. On the 12th, the Vatican Press Office announced that the Jewish declaration remained unchanged. If that was to reassure Jews, it came across as a Press Office protesting too much. On the 15th, the Secretariat closed its meeting, and the bishops went their separate ways, some sad, some satisfied, all with lips sealed. A few may have wondered if something out of order had happened and if, despite Council rules, a Council document had been substantially changed between sessions.

The Times persisted in making trouble. On June 20, under Doty's by- line, was the report that the declaration was "under study" and might be dropped altogether. On June 22, Doty filed a story amounting to a self- directed punch in the nose. Commenting to Doty on his own earlier report, a source close to Bea said it was "so deprived of any basis that it doesn't even deserve a denial." For those who have raised refutations to a fine art, that was a denial to be proud of, because it was precisely true while completely misleading. Doty had written that the declaration was under study when in fact, the study was finished, the damage was done, and there existed what many regard as a substantially new declaration on the Jews.

In Geneva, Dr. Willem Visser 'tHooft, head of the World Council of Churches, told two American priests that, if the reports were true, the ecumenical movement would be

slowed. His sentiments were not kept secret from the U.S. hierarchy. Nor was the AJC saddened into inactivity. Rabbi Tanenbaum plied Monsignor Higgins with press clippings from appalled Jewish editors. Higgins conveyed his fears to Cardinal Cushing, and the Boston prelate made polite inquiry to the Bishop of Rome. In Germany, a group for Jewish-Christian amity sent a letter to the bishops claiming, "There is now prevailing a crisis of confidence vis-`-vis the Catholic Church." At the Times, there had never been a crisis of confidence vis-`-vis its reporting from Rome, but if there had been one, it would have passed on September 10. In his story under the headline VATICAN DRAFT EXONERATING JEWS REVISED TO OMIT WORD "DEICIDE," Doty allowed no Times reader to think he had pried into Vatican secrets. He was pleased to credit as his source, "an authorized leak by the Vatican."

Similar stories in the Times foretold Council failings before they happened. Most of these were substantiated in magazine pieces and books published later, though some had traces of special pleading. The American Jewish Committee's intellectual monthly, Commentary, had offered a most bleak report on the Council and the Jews by the pseudonymous F. E. Cartus. In a footnote, the author referred the reader to a confirming account in The Pilgrim, a 281-page book by the pseudonymous Michael Serafian. Later, in Harper's magazine, Cartus, even more dour, added to the doubts on the Jewish text. To buttress his case, he recast Pilgrim passages and cited Council accounts in Time, whose Rome correspondent had surfaced for by-line status as author of a notably good book on the Council. At the time, both Time and the New York Times were glad to have an inside tipster. Just for the journalistic fun of it, the inside man's revelations were signed "Pushkin," when slipped under some correspondents' doors.

But readers were served no rewritten Pushkin on the Council's last sessions. The cassock had come off the double agent who could never turn down work. Pushkin, it turned out, was Michael Serafian in book length, F.E. Cartus for the magazines, and a translator in the Secretariat for Christian Unity, while keeping up a warm friendship with the AJC. At the time, Pushkin-Serafian- Cartus was living in the Biblical Institute, where he had been known well since his ordination in 1954, though he will be known here as Timothy Fitzharris O'Boyle, S.J. For the journalists, the young priest's inside tips and tactical leaks checked out so well that he could not resist gilding them every now and then with a flourish of creative writing. And an imprecision or two could even be charged off to exhaustion in his case. He was known to be working on a book at a young married couple's flat. The book finally got finished, but so did half of the friendship. Father Fitzharris-O'Boyle knew it was time for a forced march before his religious superior could inquire too closely into the reasons for that crisis in camaraderie. He left Rome then, sure that he could be of no more use locally.

Apart from his taste for pseudonyms, fair ladies, reports on the nonexistent and perhaps a real jester's genius for footnotes, Fitzharris- O'Boyle was good at his job in the Secretariat, valuable to the AJC and is still thought of by many around Rome as a kind of genuine savior in the diaspora. Without him, the Jewish declaration might well have gone under early, for it was Fitzharris-O'Boyle who best helped the press harass the Romans wanting to scuttle it. The man has a lot of priests' prayers.

Other years, Fitzharris-O'Boyle was around Rome when the declaration needed help. At Vatican II's fourth and last session, there was no help in sight. And things were happening very fast. The text came out weakened, as the Times said it would. Then, the Pope took off for the UN, where his *jamais plus la guerre* speech was a triumph. After that, he greeted the president of the AJC in an East Side church. That looked good for the cause. Then, at the Yankee Stadium Mass, the Pope's lector intoned a text beginning "for fear of the Jews." And on TV that sounded quite astonishing. Everywhere, there were speeches on the rises and falls of the Jewish declaration, many of them preparing for a final letdown. Lichten's executive vice-president, Rabbi Jay Kaufman, had told audiences of his own puzzlement "as the fate of the section on Jews is shuttled between momentary declaration and certain confutation, like a sparrow caught in a clerical badminton game." Shuster could hear about the same from the AJC. He could also hear the opposition. Not content with a weakened declaration, it again wanted the total victory of no declaration at all. For that, the Arabs' last words were "respectfully submitted" in a 28-page memorandum calling on the he bishops to save the faith from "communism and atheism and the Jewish-Communist alliance."

In Rome, the bishops' vote was set for October 14, and to Lichten and Shuster, the prospects of anything better looked almost hopeless. Priests had slipped each a copy of the Secretariat's secret replies to the modifications the bishops wanted. The *modi* made disconsolate reading. In the old text, the Jewish origin of Catholicism was noted in a paragraph, beginning, "In truth, with a grateful heart, the Church of Christ acknowledges..." In the *modi* sent to the Secretariat, two bishops (but which two?) suggested that "with a grateful heart" be deleted. It could, they feared, be understood to mean that Catholics were required to give thanks to the Jews of today. "The suggestion is accepted," the Secretariat decided. The replies went that way for most of 16 pages. Through all of them, few reasons were advanced for taking the warmth out of the old text and making the new one more legal than humane.

When Shuster and Lichten had finished reading, there were telephone calls to be made to the AJC and B'nai B'rith in New York. But these were not much help at either end. It was Higgins who first tried convincing two disheartened lobbyists to settle for what they would get. Yet for a day or two, Bishop Leven of San Antonio gave them hope. He thought the new statement was so weakened that the American bishops should vote en bloc against it. If followed, the tactic would have added a few hundred negative votes to the Arab- conservative side and marked the Council as so split that the Pope might not promulgate anything. The protest-vote tactic was soon abandoned. Lichten's remorse lasted longer. He sent telegrams to about 25 bishops he thought could still help retrieve the strong text. But again, it was Higgins who quietly told him to give up. "Look, Joe," the priest with the labor-lawyer manner told Lichten, "I understand your disappointment. I'm disappointed too." Then, he went off to console Shuster.

In his own room, where Higgins thinks he had Lichten and Shuster together for their first joint appearance in Rome, the priest could sound as if he were putting it straight to company men looking for a square shake from the union. "If you two give New York the impression you can get a better text, you are crazy," he told them. "Lay all your cards on the table. It's just insane to think by some pressures here or newspaper articles back in

New York, you can work a miracle in the Council. You are not going to work it, and they will think you fell down on the job.”

Lichten remembers more. “Higgins said, ‘Think how much harm can be done, Joe, if we allow these changes to erect barriers in the path we have taken for such a long time. And this may happen if your people, and mine, don’t respond to the positive aspects.’ That was the psychological turning point for me,” Lichten said. Shuster was still unreconciled, and he can remember the day well. “I had to break my head and heart,” he said, “to think what should be done. I went through a crisis, but I was convinced by Higgins. The loss of deicide, frankly, I did not consider a catastrophe. But ‘deplore’ for ‘condemn’ is another thing. When I step on your toes, you deplore what I do. But massacre? Do you deplore massacre?”

A differing view was taken by Abbi Reni Laurentin, a Council staff man who wrote to all the bishops with a last-minute appeal to conscience. Of itself, the loss of the deicide denial would not have mattered to Laurentin either, if there would never be anti-Semitism in the world again. But since history invites pessimism in this, Laurentin asked the bishops to suppose that genocide might recur. “Then, the Council and the Church will be accused,” he contended, “of having left dormant the emotional root of anti-Semitism which is the theme of deicide.” Bishop Leven had wanted the word deicide torn out of the Christian vocabulary when he argued a year earlier for the stronger text. Now, the Secretariat had even torn it out of the declaration, and proscribed it from the Christian vocabulary so abruptly that even the proscription itself was suppressed. “With difficulty, one escapes the impression,” Laurentin wrote, “that these arguments owe something to artifice.”

Before the vote in St. Peter’s, Cardinal Bea spoke to the assembled bishops. He said his Secretariat had received their modi “with grateful heart” - and the words just happened to be the very first ones deleted by his Secretariat’s vote from the new version. A year earlier, Bea had argued for getting the deicide denial into the text, and now he was defending its removal. He spoke without zeal, as if he, too, knew he was asking the bishops for less than Jules Isaac and John XXIII might have wanted. Exactly 250 bishops voted against the declaration, while 1,763 supported it. Through much of the U.S. and Europe, the press minutes later made the complex simple with headlines reading VATICAN PARDONS JEWS, JEWS NOT GUILTY or JEWS EXONERATED IN ROME.

Glowing statements came from spokesmen of the AJC and B’nai B’rith, but each had a note of disappointment that the strong declaration had been diluted. Bea’s friend Heschel was the harshest and called the Council’s failure to deal with deicide “an act of paying homage to Satan.” Later on, when calm, he was just saddened. “my old friend, the Jesuit priest Gus Weigel, spent one of the last nights of his life in this room,” Heschel said. “I asked him whether he thought it would really be ad majorem Dei gloriam if there were no more synagogues, no more Seder dinners and no more prayers said in Hebrew?” The question was rhetorical, and Weigel has since gone to his grave. Other comments ranged from the elated to the satiric. Dr. William Wexler of the World Conference of Jewish Organizations tried for precision. “The true significance of the Ecumenical Council’s

statement will be determined by the practical effects it has on those to whom it is addressed,” he said. Harry Golden of the Carolina Israelite called for a Jewish Ecumenical council in Jerusalem to issue a Jewish declaration on Christians.

With his needling retort, the columnist was reflecting a view popular in the U.S. that some kind of forgiveness had been granted the Jews. The notion was both started and sustained by the press, but there was no basis for it in the declaration. What led quite understandably to it, however, was the open wrangling around the Council that had made the Jews seem on trial for four years. If the accused did not quite feel cleared when the verdict was in, it was because the jury was out far too long.

It was out for reasons politicians understand but few thought relevant to religion. The present head of the Holy See, like the top man in the White House, believed deeply in pressing for a consensus when any touchy issue was put to a Council vote. By the principle of collegiality, in which all bishops help govern the whole Church, any real issue divided the college of bishops into progressives and conservatives. Reconciling them was the Pope’s job. For this rub in the collegial process, the papal remedy, whether persuaded or imposed, played some hob with the law of contradiction. When one faction said Scripture alone was the source of Church teaching, the other held for the two sources of Scripture and Tradition. To bridge that break, the declaration was rewritten with Pauline touches to reaffirm the two-source teaching while allowing that the other merited study. When opponents of religious liberty said it would fly against the teaching that Catholicism is the One True Church, a similar solution trickled down from the Vatican’s fourth floor. Religious liberty now starts with the One True Church teaching, which, according to some satisfied conservatives, contradicts the text that follows.

The Jewish issue was an even more troublesome one for a consensus- maker. Those who saw a dichotomy in the declaration could find it in the New Testament, too, where all are agreed it will stay. But to what extent was that issue complicated by the politics of the Arabs? In Israel, there is the feeling since the vote, and in Mideast journals there is considerable evidence for it, that the masses of Arab Christians were more indifferent to dispute than the Scriptural conservatives would like known. By the Newtonian laws of political motion, pressure begets counterpressure more often than lobbyists like to admit. And one of the hypotheses that B’nai B’rith and the AJC must ponder is that much Arab resistance and some theological intransigence were creatures of Jewish lobbying. There was anxiety all along about that, and Nahum Goldmann cautioned Jews early to “not raise the issue with too much intensity.” Some did not. After the vote, when Fritz Becker, the WJC’s silent man, admitted he once called on Bea at home, he said the declaration was not mentioned. “We just talked, the Cardinal and I,” Becker said, “about the advantages of not talking.”

There are Catholics close to what went on in Rome who think that Jewish energy did harm. Higgins, the social-action priest from Washington, D.C., is not one of them. If it had not been for the lobbying, he felt, the declaration would have been tabled. But in his usual gruff way, Cardinal Cushing said that the only people who could beat the Jewish declaration were the Jewish lobbyists. Father Tome Stransky, the touchy, young Paulist who rides a Lambretta to work at the Secretariat, thought that once the press got on to the

Council there was no way to stop such pressure groups. If the Council could have deliberated in secret with no strainings from the outside, he thinks the declaration would have been stronger.

As it stands, Stransky fears that some Catholics may gleefully pass it off as if it were written to and for Jews. “This, you have got to remember, is addressed to Catholics. This is Catholic Church business. I don’t mind telling you I’d be insulted, too, if I were a Jew and I thought this document was speaking to Jews.” For the Catholics, he thinks it is now written for its best effect.

It was Stransky’s superior in the Secretariat, Cardinal Bea, who came around most to the claims of the conservatives. Bea apparently realized fairly late that there were some Catholics, more pious than instructed, whose contempt for Jews was inseparable from their love for Christ. To be told by the Council that Jews were not Christ-killers would be too abrupt a turnabout for their faith. These were Catholicism’s simple dogmatics. But there were many bishops at the Council who, if far less simple, were no less dogmatic. They felt Jewish pressure in Rome and resented it. They thought Bea’s enemies were proved right when Council secrets turned up in American papers. “He wants to turn the Church over to the Jews,” the hatemongers said of the old Cardinal, and some dogmatics in the Council thought the charge about right. “Don’t say the Jews had any part in this,” one priest said, “or the whole fight with the dogmatics will start over.” Another, Father Felix Morlion at the Pro Deo University, who heads the study group working closely with the AJC, thought the promulgated text the best. “The one before had more regard for the sensitiveness of the Jewish people, but it did not produce the necessary clearness in the minds of Christians,” he said. “In this sense, it was less effective even to the very cause of the Jewish people.”

Morlion knew just what the Jews did to get the declaration and why the Catholics had settled its compromise. “We could have beaten the dogmatics,” he insisted. They could, indeed, but the cost would have been a split in the Church.