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SUGGESTED TOPIC WITH REFERENCE TO TV PROGRAM ON  
AUDIENCE WITH THE POPE

The Vatican during the reign of Pope Pius XII has on a number of occasions demonstrated concern with discrimination against minorities, and was conspicuous in the efforts to save many Jewish victims from Nazi persecution. Because of this known sympathy on the part of His Holiness, the American Jewish Committee felt that a declaration by the Pope at this time, condemning all forms of bigotry and anti-Semitism and asking for asylum for refugees from persecution, would be both timely and effective.

We have been distressed at the pernicious use by Communist regimes of anti-Semitism as a political tool employing the age-old tactic of scapegoating. This has occurred in recent years especially in the Eastern European satellite countries, such as Poland and Hungary. We have also been eager to open immigration opportunities to qualified victims of religious, racial and political persecution. Asylum for them becomes an obligation of all freedom-loving people. We hold that the Americas, both North and South, should play a central role in this much needed work of rescue.

Therefore, the historic declaration by His Holiness, made to the delegation of the American Jewish Committee in audience with him on June 28, 1957, was received with profound gratitude by us. This important step is but another indication of the deep concern of the Vatican for the dispossessed, the afflicted and the persecuted.

July 23, 1957

THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Chapter and Unit Chairmen

July 2, 1957

Copies To {Members of Board of Delegates  
{Members of Chapter Executive Committees

FROM: John Slawson

U R G E N T I N F O R M A T I O N

Pope Pius XII, in a private audience granted June 28th to your AJC delegation led by Irving M. Engel, issued a most important statement condemning racial and religious persecution. The Pontiff urged governments to offer asylum to such refugees. The significance of this plea -- coming from the supreme spiritual leader of the world's 484,000,000 Catholics -- is apparent.

The full text of his statement, printed July 1st in the Vatican paper, L'Osservatore Romano, and carried in today's New York Times, is attached.

May I urge you to help gain for this statement the widest possible attention in your community by:

- 1) Contacting your local newspaper editor to gain editorial support;
- 2) Contacting your radio and TV news commentators for similar support;
- 3) Approaching Catholic clerical and lay leaders for press coverage in diocesan papers and statements from the pulpit and from Catholic rostrums;
- 4) Contacting leaders of community organizations concerned with: immigration, race relations and community relations.

Your local area office and the national office will be anxious to hear whatever results you may have been able to obtain.

NOTE: If your Chapter Chairman is away, it would be most helpful if the Vice-Chairman or another officer would take the initiative.

In the near future, a full report on our mission to Israel, North Africa, Italy and France will be sent to you.

To save time, lists have not been checked for duplicates, so you may receive a second copy.

# NEWS

## THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

386 FOURTH AVENUE NEW YORK 16, N. Y. MURRAY HILL 5-0181

Washington Office: 1625 Eye Street, N.W. • Wash. 5, D.C. • District 7-3204

European Headquarters: 30 Rue La Boetie • Paris 8, France

South American Headquarters: Bulnes 1863 • Buenos Aires, Argentina

◀ This is the American Jewish Committee:

◀ Founded in 1906.

◀ Pioneer American organization combating bigotry, protecting the civil and religious rights of Jews here and abroad, and advancing the cause of human rights everywhere.

◀ Chapters in 44 principal cities; members in more than 550 American communities.

Officers

IRVING M. ENGEL, *President*

JACOB BLAUSTEIN  
JOSEPH M. PROSKAUER  
*Honorary Presidents*

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*Chairman, Executive Board*

MURRAY I. GURFEIN  
*Chairman, Administrative Board*

JOHN SLAWSON  
*Executive Vice-President*

HAROLD STEINBERG

*Director of Press Relations*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### TEXT OF STATEMENT BY POPE PIUS XII

New York, N.Y. . . . The following is the full text of a statement by Pope Pius XII, delivered at the Vatican in a private audience to a delegation of American Jewish Committee leaders. The statement was published in the Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano, July 1, 1957.

"The American Jewish Committee, which you honorable gentlemen represent, has just rounded out fifty years of service in behalf of the right and status of those of your race who, with other minority groups, have been subjected to the violation of fundamental rights inherent in the human person.

"Forced to forsake the land of their birth and seek on far-off unfamiliar shores a refuge where they might begin anew a family life, how many have then had to experience the almost desperate situation added to their miseries of not being welcome where they had hoped for hospitality.

"Your desire to visit us this morning is a testimony to your confidence in the interest we have in the sad plight of the peoples just described.

"Again and again, as did our predecessor of happy memory [Pope Pius XI] before us, we have strongly urged that the fundamental principles of justice and charity and the long-recognized practice of offering asylum to those not guilty of crime be the norm of government conduct today.

"It is a consolation to our paternal heart to know that our appeal has been generously heeded in many countries; and we like to cherish the hope that so long as that evil blight endures, states will not be lacking in their obligation to succor those who have been

"We have been happy to welcome you gentlemen and our heart goes out in a fervent prayer to God that in His bounteous goodness He have pity on those who are suffering injustice and enlighten those who are perpetrating evil."

The Pontiff delivered his plea to resettle refugees in an address to the following American Jewish Committee leaders, Friday, June 28th:

Irving M. Engel, President of the American Jewish Committee, member of Governor Harriman's Committee on Public Employees Security Procedures and former member of the U.S. Committee on Government Contract Compliance;

Herbert B. Ehrmann of Boston, Vice-President of the Committee, member of its Administrative Board, former member of the Massachusetts Judiciary Council and Massachusetts Civil Service Commission;

Martin Gang of Los Angeles, member of the Administrative Board of the American Jewish Committee, former Director of the Jewish Community Council of Los Angeles;

Frederick F. Greenman, Committee Vice-President and member of its Administrative Board, Trustee of the State University of New York and Chairman of its Committees on New Institutions and on the Community Colleges;

James Marshall, Chairman, AJC's Committee on International Organizations, member, Board of Trustees, Institute of International Education, former President New York City Board of Education;

Alan M. Stroock, Committee Vice-President and Chairman of its Foreign Affairs Committee, member of the Board of Legal Examiners;

John Slawson, Executive Vice-President American Jewish Committee and member of the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO.

The fifty-year-old American Jewish Committee is the oldest organization in this country combating bigotry, protecting civil and religious rights of Jews and advancing the cause of human rights everywhere.

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*Director of Press Relations*

### Background of the Statement by Pope Pius XII

to the

### American Jewish Committee Delegation

Anti-Semitism in the Communist orbit and the aggressive anti-Jewish policies of the Nasser régime are responsible for the present plight of tens of thousands of Jewish refugees in Europe and the Middle East. The following are the main areas of oppression and flight:

1. Poland Die-hard Stalinist forces are provoking and exploiting anti-Semitism as a political weapon. Consequently, the 50,000 Jews remaining in Poland as of October 1956 have been leaving the country at the rate of 2,500 per month.

2. Hungary The Soviet puppet regime is seeking to solidify its position by ascribing the recent revolution against Communist tyranny and the ensuing Communist massacres to "sinister machinations of the Jews." Of the 140,000 Jews in Hungary in November 1956, 20,000 fled to the free world. The migration is continuing at the rate of 1,000-1,500 per month.

3. Egypt The Nasser dictatorship has pursued a four-pronged anti-Jewish policy consisting of expulsion, economic strangulation, revocation of citizenship rights, and arrests and imprisonment. More than half of Egypt's 45,000 Jews have been forced out of the country since November 1956. Departures continue at the rate of 1,000 per month.

The delegation of American Jewish Committee leaders was granted a private audience with Pope Pius XII during a 15,000-mile survey and consultative mission to Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

The American Jewish Committee, which recently marked its fiftieth