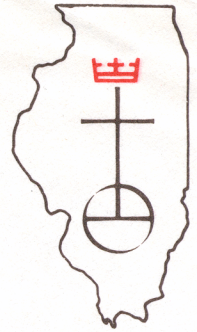


Chicago Metropolitan Association
Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ



June 29, 1977

Fred G. Traut, Association Minister

Delbert J. Schrag, Assistant
Association Minister

Rabbi Neil Brief
Niles Township Jewish Congregation
4500 Dempster
Skokie, Illinois 60076

Dear Rabbi Brief:

The enclosed letter and Statement have been sent to the one hundred and seventy congregations of the United Church of Christ in the metropolitan area.

My personal hope is that one good effect of the Nazi Party presence in our city will be to enable Jews and Christians to share life together in ways which will be enriching for all of us as well as for all the citizens of this great metropolitan area.

Shalom!

Fred G. Traut

FGT:az
Encls.

W. Sterling Cary
Conference Minister

Walter E. Ziegenhals
Director of Ecumenical Mission

Chicago Metropolitan Association
Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ



June 28, 1977

TO: The Churches of Chicago
Metropolitan Association

Dear Friends:

All of us have become aware, during recent months and weeks, of the existence of an American Nazi Party. As these lines are written, that Party is seeking a permit in order to stage a demonstration in the Village of Skokie on July 4, 1977. Seven thousand survivors of the concentration camps and the gas chambers reside in Skokie. The aim of the Nazi demonstrators is confrontation as well as feeding latent anti-semitism.

The Association's Board for Christian Witness in Society is alarmed by the prospect of purveyors of the Nazis view of life spreading those views in this metropolitan area or any metropolitan area. Accordingly, the Board is issuing the enclosed "Statement of Conscience against Neo-Nazism" to all of our congregations.

Please use the statement as you see fit in alerting your folk to the threat to a democratic society which resides in Nazi understandings. We hope that the statement will also be of assistance in renewing the unique bonds between Jew and Christian.

Fred G. Traut

Fred G. Traut
Association
Minister

Sincerely,

D. Curtis Minter

D. Curtis Minter, Chairperson
Board for Christian Witness
in Society

TM:az
Encl.

TO: The Churches of Chicago Metropolitan Association,
Illinois Conference, The United Church of Christ

FROM: The Board for Christian Witness in Society

June 28, 1977

A STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE AGAINST NEO-NAZISM

For us who call ourselves Christians, the cross of Jesus Christ is the symbol of the suffering that the One whom we call Lord endured for us. It is the sign in which we find both our pride and our shame, our humiliation and our exaltation. Living under the symbol of the Cross, the Christian community is aware of the powerful emotions that a symbol can evoke.

The brown shirts and swastikas of the Nazi Party should evoke feelings of repugnance among Christians wherever they appear, because they are the visible and tangible symbols of the suffering and death of countless numbers of Jews, to whom we are bound by a common religious heritage. As People of the Book, we declare that a system such as Nazism, which proclaims the inherent racial or genetic superiority of one group of people over another, is inconsistent with the Word of God in the Scriptures. God called Abram out of Haran, and declared that through him all the families of the earth should be blessed. By this we understand that the Fatherhood of God encompasses all people, and that we are bound together as one family. As members of one family we must stand firm against any system that preaches pre-eminence of one group over another.

Millions of our brothers and sisters lost their lives to the tyranny of Nazism. We take issue with those who would seek to deny the reality of the Holocaust. With Christ, who was Himself a Jew, we abhor and align ourselves against the distorted political and geneological philosophy of the Nazi Party. We stand with the survivors of the Holocaust, and all of the survivors of the Nazi system, in declaring our outrage at the re-appearance of the symbols and hatreds of the Nazi Party within our own society. We cry out in pain that the cruelty of Nazism would again seek to inflict pain upon the common family of humanity. And, we pray for its eradication from our land.