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A Joint Commission of the
Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Central Conference of American Rabbis
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Director: RABBI BALFOUR BRICKNER

January 9, 1974

Rabbi Norman Lamm
131 West 86 Street
New York, New York 10024

Dear Norman:

I write now to ask you to hold the dates of February 11-12 for a most important intimate meeting in Washington, D.C. You are one of 10 persons to whom I have written. I have spoken with some of you personally about this. I will be calling each of you. Now, however, I only want to alert you to the date and describe briefly what it is all about.

As a result of some long and detailed conversations and plans which I have been having with a few key persons on the executive staff of the United Presbyterian Church of the United States, we have finally agreed to hold an intensive, intimate conversation on Middle East questions in Washington, D.C. beginning 4:00 p.m. Monday, February 11 and going through luncheon the following day. They are inviting 10 of their top people, executive and lay, and I am doing the same from the American Jewish religious community. There will only be 20 persons at the sessions. Included is their list of invitees. Three basic topics will be on the table:

The Third World perceptions of Israel as an Imperialist nation now creeping into the thinking of some elements of the religious community;

The Palestinians;

Framing a religious response to the Middle East.

Each of these agenda items is now being drawn up in a more detailed fashion and will soon be sent to you for your further consideration. I mention them now, however, so you will see the general areas of our conversations.



Jan. 9, 1974

Some of you have seen their preliminary study document: "Peoples and Conflict in the Middle East." Some of us were asked to comment on it in its initial draft form. Since then, it has been circulated throughout the church community and is now being evaluated and possibly revised. Moreover, leadership in the Presbyterian church is anxious to meet for in-depth conversations with a few of their counterparts in the Jewish religious community. We are pleased to be able to help bring this meeting about, though unfortunately we have no funds to even defray your expenses.

Please let me know immediately if you are interested and whether you might be able to be with us. Those to whom a similar invitation is being extended by the Presbyterians include:

Dr. William Thompson, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church
Oscar McCloud
Dean Lewis
Josiah Beeman
Jack Stotts, Chairman of the Council on Church and Society
Syngman Rhee
Donald Wilson
Professor Elwyn Smith
Peter Johnson
P.E. McAllister, a layman, member of their Council on Church and Society

I need not tell you how important such a meeting can be, and how delicate the planning process.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



/as

Rabbi Balfour Brickner

TO: Morris Levinson
Paul Dobin
Al Vorspan
Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg
Rabbi Robert Gordis
Rabbi Irving Greenberg
Rabbi Henry Siegman
Rabbi David Polish