

**Statements and Actions of American Protestants
Regarding Anti-Semitism, the Holocaust, and Refugees: 1933 to 1943**

1933 –Manifesto signed by 1200 Protestant clergy in North America protests “the pitiless persecution to which the Jews are subjected under Hitler’s rule.”

1935 – Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America (FCCCA) protests Germany’s treatment of Jews.

1938 - Roosevelt causes Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders to form International Committee to raise funds to facilitate emigration of German and Austrian refugees to Latin America. (!)

1939 – FCCCA day of prayer for suffering of refugees and appeal for relief of refugees as carried on by Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish organizations.

1939 – Protestant and Catholic leaders petition Roosevelt to admit German children to the US.

1939 – Presbyterian Church of the USA (PCUSA) General Assembly (GA) expresses “deep sorrow “for “persecution of Jewish people” and “profound misgivings” at “growing anti-Semitism in America that should be combated aggressively in our Churches.”

1939 – PCUSA Board of National Missions (BNM) launches appeal for funds “on behalf of Jews and Non-Aryans who are being “annihilated by a process which is unbelievably brutal and which involves the most refined torture of the human soul.”

1940 – American Jewish Appeal gives \$125,000 to FCCCA “as an acknowledgement of the sympathy and support of the leaders of the Protestant Churches for all victims of religious and racial persecution.”

1940 – PCUSA BNM reports to the GA on refugee work and new limitations on land purchases by Jews in Palestine which drastically curtailed Jewish immigration and struck “a sever blow to the dreams of those who would have seen Palestine a refuge for Jews.” American has admitted only 75,000 refugees since 1933. “No country welcomed them [and] hundreds upon hundreds are wanderers, refused asylum at port after port, living in a nightmare of uncertainty and utter despair.”

1940 – PCUSA GA calls upon church “to uphold the American tradition of sanctuary for the oppressed” and on government to continue the effort to solve the problems of re-establishing refugees.

1942 – Following visits to France and Switzerland, FCCCA head confirms to World Jewish Congress in Geneva that “as has been reported, deportation by Nazis really meant extermination.”

1942 – FCCCA adopts resolution stating that “a policy of deliberate extermination of the Jews in Europe is being carried out” and will “climax in a virtual massacre.” “We are resolved to do our full part in establishing conditions in which such treatment of the Jews shall end.... For those who, after the war, will have to emigrate ... immigration opportunities should be created in this and other lands.”

1943 – Representatives of Synagogue Council of America and FCCCA meet to discuss ways churches might “help develop a stronger support for the needs of refugees from Europe, a measure of relief in the form of food for at least some of the Jews in Europe, and a safe and respected place for Jews in the post-war world.”

1943 – FCCCA seeks to provide American churches with all available evidence concerning the treatment of Jews under the Nazi regime; to urge all Christian people to give moral support to whatever measures afford promise of rescuing European Jews whose lives are in jeopardy; and to appeal to the government to offer financial assistance for support of refugees that neutral governments may be able to receive and to provide place of temporary asylum to which refugees may be removed for the duration of the war, with the understanding that they “will be repatriated or be provided with permanent homes in other ways.”

1943 –GA calls upon PCUSA to “protest against the wholesale and ruthless persecution of Jews now going on in the many lands of Europe under Nazi domination [and] to give all possible aid to victims of legalized anti-Semitism, and to urge unceasingly all possible government action...here and abroad, to assure the rescue of as many of the European Jews as possible from their threatened complete annihilation and extermination.”

1943 – United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPNA) urges its people “to oppose faithfully every manifestation of anti-Semitism and to continue in importunate prayer for these brethren of our Lord according to the flesh.”