



June 18, 2008

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United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism
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Dr. Carl Sheingold, Executive Vice President
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Beit Devora
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Rabbi Eric Yoffie, President
Union for Reform Judaism
633 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017-6778

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for your frank responses to the posting of our expanded resource on “Vigilance against Anti-Jewish Bias in the Pursuit of Israeli-Palestinian Peace.” It is clear that, in making the changes to its original version, we have strained our relationships with you, and awakened mistrust between us, and we regret this.

In order to hear more about your responses and the concerns that lie behind them, and in the spirit of honest exploration of the close ties that do bind our two communities, we want to invite you to meet with us soon after our upcoming General Assembly.

The Vigilance resource has provoked a great deal of reaction, and many questions. We want to give more careful consideration to the issues, and to continue the process of developing a useful resource or resources on this topic.

It is important to us, and for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to be in dialogue with you about the issues on which we have tried to speak in this resource. Giving adequate attention to contemporary instances of the Christian teaching of contempt for Jews and Judaism requires careful attention to issues and ideas that are difficult and multifaceted. Focusing on these issues in the context of our Middle East public policy advocacy is all the

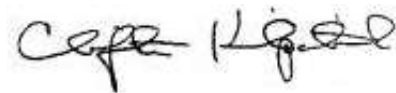
more difficult, since the demands for justice for Israelis and Palestinians are matters of life and death, and starkly different approaches to that situation are pursued passionately and publicly. Both of these are essential parts of our Christian commitment to justice for all people, and matters that need further conversation among us.

We hope that you will agree to join us for this conversation, and also to talk about other matters that may warrant our attention coming out of the Assembly itself. We look forward to making arrangements with you for such a get together, to talk together about who should be part of the conversation from both of our communities, and to develop a useful framework for the time we will have with each other.

I, Cliff, want to add just how much I have appreciated our relationships, especially over these last years. Your candor and grace mean a great deal to me. So it is with some sadness, but also with every reason for hope for the future, that I remind you that it may be my successor at this next meeting, rather than myself. I am glad that my colleague Linda Valentine and the new Stated Clerk will continue our relationships.

And I, Linda, look forward to ongoing, honest and productive relationships with each of you, as well as to the joyful work of continuing to build understanding, respect and collaboration between our communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cliff Kirkpatrick". The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized font.

Cliff Kirkpatrick, Stated Clerk, Office of the General Assembly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda B. Valentine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing font.

Linda Valentine, Executive Director, General Assembly Council