

JERUSALEM:

The historic meeting at the Vatican between Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir and Pope Paul VI has once again focused world attention on the future of the city of Jerusalem.

The "Golden City," symbol of monotheism to East and West, renowned in literature and poetry, is a city steeped in history and mysticism. Nowhere else in the world can be found such a concentration of religious shrines of importance, sacred to so many people.

For Jews, there is the Wailing Wall, a surviving remnant of the rampart that encircled the Second Temple, which was destroyed in A.D. 70 by the Romans under Titus.

Beyond the Wall stand Al Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the

Rock, which marks the spot where Mohammed, around A.D. 620, is said to have started his remarkable "Night Journey" to the seven heavens in company with the Archangel Gabriel.

Nearby are the Via Dolorosa, the path that Christians believe was followed by Jesus on the way to his crucifixion, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which stands on the spot where, tradition has it, he was placed in the tomb.

During the Six-Day War of 1967, Israeli troops seized the Jordanian-held Old City and other Arab sectors of Jerusalem, and Israeli authorities declared that, whatever the fate of the other occupied territories, a reunited Jerusalem had returned to Israel forever.

World Attention Again Focused On 'Golden City' of Monotheism

Confirming that view, Mrs. Meir, at a ceremony in April 1972, honoring Israeli soldiers killed in the 1967 war, declared that "the eternal city shall remain for all time a unified city of the capital of the state of Israel."

The problem, then, is the future of a city, which Mrs. Meir has vowed "will never again be divided," but which is also sacred to three of the world's great religions.

In search for a solution, three proposals have been advanced: 1) a return to the status that existed before the Six-Day War; 2) Internationalization under United Nations control of either all of Jerusalem or of its sections with religious significance; 3) acknowledgment of Israel's jurisdiction over the entire city, along with some measure of autonomy for both shrines and the Arab population.

A return to the "status quo ante 1967" seems, in the view of most observers, highly unlikely. Today the United States and many other nations, which do not formally recognize Israel's right to control Jerusalem; do not recognize, either, the claims to the Old City made by Jordan's King Hussein. To stress the point, 33 nations maintain embassies 35 miles away in Tel Aviv rather than in Jerusalem, the capital.

Evan Wilson, author of "Jerusalem, Key to Peace," who served as U.S. Consul General at Jerusalem from 1964 to late 1967, believes otherwise.

Following a visit to Jerusalem, after an absence of five years, Mr. Wilson wrote in the American Jesuit magazine, America (Oct. 7, 1972): "As far as the future of the city is concerned, it is obvious that internationalization, even of a limited area of the city, is out of the question — as is any Israeli withdrawal from the Old City of Jerusalem."

In fact, in the light of what he refers to as "the steady decline" in the Christian Arab population of Jerusalem, and the various new construction projects in and around the city, Mr. Wilson thinks it likely that Jerusalem is "fated to become less and less the international religious and world center that it has been in the past."

Whether other outside observers would agree with Mr. Wilson's assessment of the situation is debatable, but some have seen what they think is a subtle change in the position of the Vatican on the question of internationalization of the Holy City.

In an address before the College of Cardinals in June, 1971, Pope Paul said that Jerusalem, "enjoying as it does a unique and mysterious destiny, should be protected by a special statute guaranteed by an international treaty."

Following the Pope's meeting with Mrs. Meir, the Vatican released an official statement, which made no mention of internationalization, as such, but referred to the pontiff's concern with "the sacred and universal character of Jerusalem."

To the Washington Post, this represents a "gradual shift" away from the Vatican's "old position of supporting the internationalization of Jerusalem, toward an emphasis — one much more palatable to Israel — on being assured access to the Holy Places in the city."

Israeli officials in Tel Aviv believe that the Pope, in restricting himself to emphasis on "the sacred and universal character" of Jerusalem, has set forth a formula that, the officials say, eventually could be brought into harmony with Israel's proposal for it.

From a theological viewpoint, according to many Christian thinkers, a Jerusalem under Israeli jurisdiction makes certain sense. More than for Christianity or Islam they say, the "City

of David" has special meaning for Judaism.

For Muslims, Jerusalem invokes deep feelings, and the Dome of the Rock makes the city the third holiest for Muslims after Mecca and Medina. Still, there is no imperative for the faithful to visit the Dome as there is for them to make a pilgrimage to Mecca.

For the Jews Jerusalem is their hearts' desire as devout individuals, their goal and fulfillment as God's chosen people. The city is specifically mentioned 750

times in Hebrew Scripture, and referred to as the "City of David," "holy City," or "Temple Mount" a thousand times or more.

There is ample evidence, according to Evan Wilson, that the Israeli government has adhered "scrupulously" to its pledge of providing free access to all the Holy Places, insisting that the sites be properly maintained.

The clergy in the city, both Christian and Muslim, says Mr. Wilson, "appear satisfied with these arrangements."

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New Organization

The Mesdames (l.-r.) William Deagman, Tom Deagman, Francis Rush and Edwin Gratton were recently installed as officers in the newly formed Palmyra organization, Daughters of St. Anne.

Canandaigua Area Notes

Shortsville — St. Dominic's of Shortsville recently received a donation of \$200 from a gentleman in gratitude for favors received. The money was used to purchase film-strips, slides, and other equipment for the CCD program.

Victor — With the forming of the parish council several years ago it was decided at St. Patrick's to disband the Rosary Al-

tar Society. Every woman, however, was not happy with that decision. Jan. 18, thirty women attended a meeting at St. Patrick's School of Religion. All of them were in favor of reorganizing the society. The new Rosary Altar Society will hold its first meeting Feb. 1, at the School of Religion. At that time officers for the coming year will be elected. All women of the parish are invited to attend.

Ecumenism High In Penn Yan

By JOY CHALONE

Penn Yan — St. Michael's Parish is embarking on several new ecumenical movements, according to Father Thomas McVeigh, pastor and Father William Cosgrove, assistant.

One such service was recently held at the First United Methodist Church. Father Geoffrey Robbins, pastor of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, gave the sermon and all the clergymen of the various area churches, including St. Michael's, took part in the service.

Another new activity being initiated is the Ecumenical Youth Singing Group. Junior and Senior High students from all denominations will form a combined choir which will concentrate on music in line with the age group's taste. The first practice session was Monday, at the First Baptist Church.

Also, at a recent Parish Council meeting at St. Michael's, Reverend Douglas Archer, pastor of the Baptist Church in Second Mile was invited. He explained a project soon to be undertaken by the local churches.

Ithaca Area Notes

Penn Yan — Miss Rita Curbeau, a junior at Nazareth College, has been tutoring some of the children in the primary department at St. Michael's School, for the month of January.

Ithaca — Father Kevin Murphy, associate chaplain at Cornell University, recently took care of the entire Ithaca area Courier-Journal

Catholic community while all the other priests attended a symposium in Rochester on Church Administration.

Watkins Glen and Odessa — Father Robert J. Donovan recently underwent an operation at Schuyler Hospital. He is convalescing now.