Date November 18, 1948

To  E. Azihil Fineberg
From  Samuel R. Kan
Subject Correction on Television Announcement

With reference to the section in the draft referring to the WABD appearance of Dr. Rosenbaum as the first time in history that the Torah has been televised, please correct this to read that it was the "first formal presentation of the Torah on any television program."

SRK
With the American Jewish Committee cooperating in presenting the Jewish phase of the program every Friday, "Morning Chapel," a new religious television program, has been inaugurated by the Dumont Station WABD on Monday through Friday inclusive from 9:15 to 9:30 AM, Eastern Standard Time.

Marking the first time the Torah has been seen on a television program, Dr. Arthur J. S. Rosenbaum, director of interfaith activities for the American Jewish Committee, was the guest on "Morning Chapel" on Friday, November 12, 1948, speaking on "What is Torah?" Samuel Kligfeld, cantor of the Genesis Hebrew Center of Crestwood, N.Y., sang the liturgical music.

The sacred scroll containing the Five Books of Moses was televised for the first time in history after a recorded existence of more than 2,500 years. The spirit and tradition of the Torah is shared by Christians as well as Jews and is "fundamental to American democracy," Rabbi Rosenbaum declared. He emphasized that the Torah, mentioned in the Old Testament (II Kings, 22) as having existed in written form as early as 621 B.C. in the 18th year of King Josiah's reign, is universal in its teachings. Its essence lies in the practice of justice, love of fellow-men and social reform, he asserted, for it "is not limited in its application to believers or members of one group, one color or one faith."

The first Jewish presentation of "Morning Chapel" was televised on November 5, with Dr. David DeSola Pool, rabbi of the Spanish-Portuguese Synagogue in New York, speaking on "The Optimism of Judaism." These programs will continue indefinitely. The Catholic presentation is on Wednesday mornings, while Protestant services are held on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The American Jewish Committee is the first organization to present Jewish religious programs on the television screen. In addition to preparing the Jewish hour on "Morning Chapel," the AJC currently arranges a monthly Jewish program for the "Television Chapel of the Air" over Station WPIX. A Chanukah video show will be produced over that station with the cooperation of the AJC.
Spot announcements stressing interfaith and goodwill themes are also furnished to television stations by the American Jewish Committee. Under the auspices of the radio and television department of the agency, the film, "Make Way for Youth," produced by Robert Disraeli, director of the audio-visual education department of the American Jewish Committee, and Meyer Levin's film on Palestine, "The House in the Desert," also have been televised.