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Conférence Internationale du 30 juin au 3 juillet 2013 à Aix-en-Provence
International Conference from June 30 – July 3, 2013 in Aix-en-Provence

**La Laïcité: une chance ou un défi pour les religions?
En France et dans le monde**

**Secularity: Opportunity or Peril for Religions,
The French Experience and Global Perspectives**

Tuesday, July 2, 2013

Memorial Session for Ruth Weyl

By Dr Deborah Weissman, ICCJ President

It is my sad task to convene this memorial session for our dear friend and colleague Ruth Weyl, who passed away in mid-May of this year. Let us all rise for a moment of silence in her memory.

This is my first ICCJ conference without Ruth. It is difficult not to have her input anymore at the Board meeting, not to sit near her at the Jewish service in the morning, not to enjoy her humor and her elegance and her zest for life. I especially miss her here in Aix, because she was such a wonderful bridge between the English-and French-speaking worlds. Ruth had been looking forward to this conference since we began planning it.

She was a very caring person who often called me from London just to say hello. For someone who called herself a secularist, she spent a lot of time in synagogue and for someone who usually prefaced her remarks by saying, “Well, of course, I’m not a theologian...” she had some very interesting theological insights.

Ruth was the living organizational memory of the ICCJ. For many decades, she brought her seemingly boundless energy and vitality to promoting dialogue between Jews and Christians within the CCJ and then also Jews, Christians and Muslims, within the Three Faiths Forum, locally, nationally and internationally. For her outstanding efforts, she was awarded both the Interfaith Gold Medallion and the International Sir Sigmund Sternberg Award.

Once, in a personal e-mail to me, Ruth wrote: “I am always mindful to react gently so as not to give the impression that ‘the old lady thinks she knows it all.’ Well, she knew a great deal, and we will sorely miss her knowledge, her wisdom and her friendship. May her memory be blessed.