

SUBJECT ONE: "THE MISSION"

DATE: 17.4.79 JOURNAL: "OLAM HAZEH" (HEBREW WEEKLY URI AVNERI) FEATURE ARTICLE
 HEADING: "THE TRUTH ABOUT THE PROPHET FROM BETH-EL" (THE ORTHODOX CONCEALED THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN IN MEAH SHEARIM, THE PRESS INCITED, AND THE RABBINICAL COURT ORDERED THE RETURN OF THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN TO HER HUSBAND IN ORDER TO SAVE BOTH FROM THE HANDS OF THE JEWISH COUPLE WHO HAD ARRANGED THEIR WEDDING ACCORDING TO THE RITES OF JUDAISM)
 BYLINE: (NONE) PHOTOS: (a) PLACARD PRODUCED BY "YAD L'AKHIM" FIGHTING MISSIONARIES, DENOUNCING THE LEVYS, WHO MANAGED AN OTTOMAN SOCIETY. HAS AHARON LEVY INVENTED A RELIGION THAT IS A SYNTHESIS OF JUDAISM & CHRISTIANITY? (b) THE GROOM: Bill Hicks, whose father was a suicide, his sister died from an overdose of drugs, his mother an alcoholic...came to get his wife. (c) THE BRIDE: Londa Hicks, whose parents separated when she was an infant, and she barely knew her father, but saw Levy as a father. (c) THE FRIEND: Levy is an active person, and during the elections prophesied that Begin would win; after the elections he was received by the Prime Minister (d) THE COUPLE & THE LAWYER: The Christian husband returned to the USA and upon his return received from the Rabbinate an order releasing his wife from the Levy household. Advocate Nahum feared that the woman would object and therefore appealed to the organization YAD L'AKHIM to find a hiding place in Meah Shearim (e) LINDA & FRIEND: Kail Romans who also lived in the Levy home with her husband...Brainwashing like in a film.
 EXCERPTS: Is the Rabbinate in Israel authorized to perform a wedding for a Christian couple according to the rites of Judaism? Most certainly not! The law authorizes it to handle matrimonial affairs of Jews only. However, in the wake of the Aharon Levy affair (called the "prophet of Bethel") which has recently been published so widely in the press, this interesting juridical question has been raised.

The Tel-Aviv Rabbinate performed the wedding of the Hicks couple in 1976 after being persuaded that the couple are children of Jewish mothers, and are therefore Jews legally according to the Jewish religion. In actual fact the two of them are Christians, as were their mothers. They lied to the Rabbinate and produced false witnesses in order to persuade the Rabbinate to marry them as Jews. Now, are such marriages, the result of fraud, legal marriages in Israeli law? And have the two become Jews as a result of the Rabbinic recognition they obtained by the Rabbinate? And is the Israeli citizenship which they obtained by virtue of the Law of Return, after being recognized as Jews by the Rabbinical court, valid? Do their new immigrant rights, obtained as a result of all this, remain legal? One more important question: Can the Rabbinical Court continue to handle their affairs after it has learned that the parties and their witnesses deceived them, and that it had sponsored the wedding of non-Jews? (There follows a detailed outline of the affair for which see clippings translated in previous Selections No. 57...the substance being essentially the same, but more objectively presented here.)

Advocate Nahum submitted in the name of Bill two petitions to the Rabbinical Court: In these petitions he stated that the couple had been married by civil ceremony in the USA, and according to the rites of Judaism by the Israeli Rabbinate. For some reason, he did not note that they are Christians, and that they were also married in a church in the USA. He also ~~related~~ did not relate that they had obtained their marital rites (in Israel) by means of false declarations. But he did stress that Londa was living in the Levy home, that he was leading a religious missionary sect, that he claims that he is the Messiah and that he works on the basis of commandments delivered to him directly from the mouth of God, and that his faith is a synthesis of Christianity and Judaism. He stated that the couple had worked for Levy for several years without compensation, and that Levy imposed an ascetic and abstemious life upon them, forbade them to have children, and used methods of fright against them. According to him, Levy threatened them that if they disobeyed him they would die at the hand of God. The husband further claimed that his wife was lacking in a sense of free will and completely in bondage to Levy. He therefore petitioned the Rabbinate to bring about peace in the home between him and his wife in order that they might live happily and bring children into the world, and requested the Court to issue an order forbidding Londa any contact with Levy, and enabling the husband to reclaim his wife. An additional request was for an order prohibiting Levy from having any contact with Londa.

In the (latter) request it was stated that in order to prevent Londa from doing something foolish or committing suicide, the Rabbinical Court should issue these orders/ ~~in the presence of~~ ^{in the presence of} one party only...that is, not to notify Londa or Levy. In order to convince the Court of the truth of the facts detailed in the petitions, excerpts from the newspaper "MAARIV" were attached, wherein Nurith Dovrat (the MAARIV reporter...see Selections 57) detailed the Levy affair. The Rabbinical Court, notwithstanding the fact that it already knew through one of Bill Hicks' letters, that the ^{couple were} Christians, issued the orders. And in the wake of these orders, Bill the Christian, his lawyer and a policeman went out to remove Londa from the Levy household and restore her to her husband.

MORE

Londa adamantly refused to comply with the order. She screamed, she wept, she hid herself in the house and refused to leave. The policeman avoided intervening, and finally all the parties came to the police station in Holon. Here Londa was persuaded to leave the Levy home in compliance with the Rabbinical order and to go with her husband. The first night Londa spent with Bill and with a young psychologist from the USA, Reid Heller, who was brought to the house of Advocate Nahum specially in order to rescue her. However, the second and third nights the couple and the psychologist spent in Meah Shearim where the YAD L'AKHIM organization which wars against the missionaries rented a flat.

According to Nurith Dovrat (MAARIV reporter), the help of the religious organization was needed because they did not know how Londa would react upon being removed from the Levys. If she were to react violently, it would be impossible to keep her in a hotel, and in order to prevent Levy from finding her, it was decided that Meah Shearim would be an ideal hiding place.

It took only three days in the company of the psychological specialist (specializing "in removing young people from destructive religious sects and returning them to their families") to restore Londa to her husband and to free her from Levy. Thus the young woman dressed in new clothes stood on the witness stand and testified against Levy and his wife. The cross-examination of the defence attorneys, Moshe Tene and Zvi Lidsky, did not avail to disclose what had happened to the young woman during these three days, and how she had turned tail and changed her views.

The Levy couple were detained for ten days, accused of giving false testimony before a Rabbinical court, and of committing tax and customs offences, while the Hicks couple which had committed the actual offences, were granted immunity by the prosecution. Avraham Landstein, representative of the Prosecution, promised this. During the course of the investigations there were published many remarks about the religious faith of the Levys. They were compared to the religious sect of Jim Jones in the USA whose mass suicide shocked the world. The press stigmatized Levy as "The False Prophet," "Elijah the Prophet," "The Apostle," "The Leader," "the Prophet of Indignation," and a Miniature Jim Jones."

A careful search of the laws of the State of Israel fail to disclose that there is any offence in a man serving any kind of religion in his own home. A man may worship the Japanese Shinto in his home or any other kind of idolatry. The new law since 1977 punishes by five years imprisonment anyone enticing another to change his religion by promising him economic benefits. The prosecutor Landstein has said that he is not considering bringing charges against the Levys for violation of this statute in that he enticed the Hickses to convert to Judaism. It appears that such an accusation will not be made. Nevertheless, the walls of the municipality were covered this week with placards denouncing "the missionary Aharon Levy and his wife facing criminal charges." The placards were signed by YAD L'AKHIM.

Now, if the Levys committed any legal offence, they should be brought to trial and afforded opportunity to defend themselves and to present witnesses in their defence. But if there is no offence involved in their activities, is it right to try them in the press and by public opinion, to tag them with pejoratives, to incite people against them, without affording them any means of defence, and to rather become involved in the campaign of religious elements opposing them? The YAD L'AKHIM organization, which is engaged in a campaign against missionaries trapping innocent Jewish souls into Christianity has now changed its course. It has taken under its wing a Christian couple which deceived the Rabbinate, and it has helped remove the Christian Londa from the home of the Jew Levy. END ARTICLE

DATE: 4.4.79 JOURNAL: "MAARIV" (HEB PM IND) NEWS STORY
 HEADING: "LONDA HICKS, THE YOUNG WOMAN REMOVED FROM THE INFLUENCE OF THE PROPHET OF BETHEL TESTIFIED YESTERDAY: 'DADDY' & 'MOMMA' SAID: IT IS FORBIDDEN TO BEAR CHILDREN-- THE WORLD IS SOON TO BE DESTROYED."

BYLINE: NURITH DOVRAT PHOTO INSET: LONDA HICKS

EXCERPTS: Londa Hicks, age 24, yesterday testified in the District Court of Tel Aviv before Judge Wallach in the affair of "the Prophet" Aharon Levy and his wife Helena of the sect "Bethel Zion" in Azur. The Deputy District Attorney, Mr. Avraham Kjeinstein, announced that a charge sheet would be submitted against the two for fraudulent acts of a severe kind.... Notwithstanding the opposition of the defence attorney, Moshe Tene, the Judge Wallach decided to acquiesce to the prosecution's request to hear the testimony of Londa inasmuch as she was about to leave the country and return to the USA. Her testimony would be kept until the opening of the trial. It was announced yesterday that she had been granted immunity and now had the status of State Witness. (There follow details of the charges as presented in previous accounts of the affair above and in previous selections No. 57) The witness also testified that "in the evenings we had religious ceremonies when Levy read in English from the New Testament, spoke about God and about Jesus, related his dreams, and gave instructions, which

according to him, he received directly from God." Concerning the condition of the Ottoman Society which Levy set up "for philanthropic purposes," and concerning its financial condition, Londa stated that she had not been involved in it, but that she knew that from time to time financial contributions and gifts were received. At the request of Mrs. Levy she used to type the letters and speeches of the prophet which were then duplicated by him.

The circulars, the tracts, the colorful proclamations, the newspapers, all relating the praise of "the messenger of the Lord," and of the activities of the sect he headed up, were submitted by the Deputy District Attorney as exhibits of the prosecution. This material was sent by Levy to members of the sect, to people whom ^{he} sought to recruit to his sect, and to potential contributors. The Levys often traveled to the USA and remained there for long periods. Upon their return, there were additional appliances in the house....

Londa Hicks explained yesterday the factors which had led her to join the sect: "I grew up in a house where my parents were divorced, and I barely knew my father. Levy was a father figure to me. At the beginning I enjoyed the quiet life in his place, but later the Levys began to quarrel with my husband, and to cause a rift between us and the couple living with us. In that way they planned to get control over us. They forbade us to have any contact with people who did not belong to the sect, including members of the family. I believed what Levy said and all his opinions. He always had explanations, and he would persuade by means of illustrations from the New Testament, which I believed with all my heart. Little by little there was a kind of brainwashing. Meanwhile, I was filled with an awful fear that I would be punished if I didn't obey him. He and his wife instilled this fear in me and also the sense of isolation and withdrawal from the outside world. When my husband Bill began to show signs of opposition to them, they began to call him 'Swine,' and 'Satan,' and frightened me by saying he would kill me. So when Bill wanted to leave Bethel a year ago, I remained behind. When he came about two weeks ago to take me back to him, I was against it, because I was frightened. On the basis of the Rabbinical Court's order I left Bethel and lived with my husband for several days. In that way my eyes were opened, and I understood what had happened with me and how I had been dragged into this."

The attorney Zvi Misky tried to argue in his cross-examination that it was not the Levys who had brainwashed Londa and persuaded her to live in their manner, but it was her husband Bill and his psychologist friend whom he had brought with him from the USA who had "brainwashed her" after she left Bethel and they persuaded her to ~~not~~ make declarations against the Levys in order to take vengeance on them. The attorney Moshe Tene submitted a news story which appeared in MAARIV which was received as an exhibit by the court, with the defence expressing its reservations. The name of MAARIV was brought in many times during the course of the investigation. In the course of the testimony of Londa Hicks, Mrs. Levy burst out with loud shouts attacking the young woman as a liar. The Levys are under arrest by order of Judge Miriam Porat. Today Bill Hicks, the husband of Londa Hicks, and the psychologist Read Miller will testify in court. END STORY.

DATE: 5.4.79 JOURNAL: "YEDIOT AKHRONOT" (HEB PM IND) NEWS STORY
HEADING: "THE SUSPECT IN THE RELIGIOUS SECT AFFAIR FAINTED IN COURT"

BYLINE: Moshe Ronen, Yediot Akhronot Correspondent

QUOTE: Helen Levy, the suspect with her husband Aharon of fraudulent activity and false testimony in the framework of the religious sect "Bethel Zion" which they managed in Azur, fainted yesterday while in the dock in the Telaviv District Court. The suspect, aged 61, was sitting for hours beside her husband, listening to the testimony of Bill Hicks, the young man who had been enticed together with his wife Londa into membership in the small religious sect. After about three hours of testimony, at around 2:00 p.m., the Defence Attorney, Moshe Tene, came to one of the basic questions in his cross-examination: "Was Helen Levy partner with her husband in all his doings?" When Bill Hicks answered affirmatively, there was a noise heard coming from the dock. Helen collapsed and fell under the table before her. The court guards hastened to order an ambulance, which took the suspect to the nearby Ichilov Hospital.

The prosecutor, Avraham Landstein, has accused Aharon Levy and Helen Levy of perjury in testifying that the American-Protestant couple Bill & Londa Hicks are Jewish, misleading the young couple into perjuring themselves, and also customs violations resulting from their exploitation of the immigrant's rights given the young Protestant couple. At the beginning of his testimony Bill Hicks yesterday insisted on donning a "kippah" (skullcap) and swearing with his hand on a Tenakh (Old Testament). His wife Londa ~~took~~ took the oath the day before yesterday on the New Testament. After the testimony of Bill Hicks, the psychologist Reid Miller testified yesterday. He specializes in dealing with small and strange religious sects like "Peoples Temple" of Jim Jones - whose members recently committed mass suicide. The courtroom was filled with ultra-orthodox youth listening to the hearing. After their testimony, the Hikes were permitted to leave Israel. The Levys were released on bail of IL20,000 each. END STORY (MORE)

DATE: 6.4.79 JOURNAL: "MAARIV" (HEB PM IND) NEWS STORY
 HEADING: "THE COUPLE WHICH HAD COMPLAINED ABOUT 'THE PROPHET' LEVY HAVE LEFT ISRAEL"
 BYLINE: NURITH DOVRAT

QUOTE: The frauds division of the Israeli Police Dept, headed by Officer Gabrieli and Sgt Michael Horowitz, is continuing its investigation of the affair of the "prophet" Aharon Levy of Azur who was released from prison on Wednesday with his wife Helena. The investigation will centre principally on the activities of the Ottoman Society of "Bethel Zion" which the Levys set up, in matters of customs and income taxes unpaid, etc. An effort is being made to bring back to Israel the couple Kail and Brad Romans who spent several years at "Bethel" with their two children, and who succeeded to break loose about 1½ years ago.

Linda and Bill Hicks, who made the complaint against Levy and gave pre-trial testimony to the District Court, left Israel last night. They intend to rehabilitate their lives in Dallas in the USA, and promised to return to Israel in the near future and to undergo formal conversion to Judaism--in contrast to the process they underwent at the Rabbinate when they were married as Jews on the basis of false testimony they gave with "their prophet".

Yesterday Aharon Levy signed the statement he had made to the police, after which he was released on bail and his passport was taken from him. A similar step was also taken in connection with his wife. The charge sheet will be presented against them in the near future. The paragraphs of the charge sheet include serious counts of fraud, perjury, instigation to perjury, offences against customs and income tax laws. The police is presently investigating whether to submit additional charge sheets. END STORY

DATE: 23.2.79 JOURNAL: "SHEARIM" (HEB AM AGUDAT ISRAEL) EDITORIAL
 HEADING: "THE MATTER WAS NOT INVESTIGATED IN DEPTH"

QUOTE: A couple of missionaries were married to each other according to the rites of Judaism in order to benefit from Israeli law, benefits granted to its children returning to the homeland. A spokesman for the Min. of Relig. Affairs justified himself: "The matter was not investigated in depth." It is our duty to disclose to every interested party just where is this depth found that is so hard to arrive at, and even experienced judges fail as a result. The "depth" is found in the defective Law of Return which does not explicitly demand that a Gentile converted to Judaism only on the basis of "halakha" (Orthodox Jewish law). The writer of these lines, for instance, is prepared to present by invitation on the back of a postcard a young woman before a Rabbinical court, and to recommend that she be married to a Yeshiva student, a scholar and Godfearing man, and for the purpose of identifying the young woman as a Jewess; to show to the Court the birth certificate issued in the Holy Land where she is registered as a Jewess, and also the Identity Card of the mother of the girl who is registered as a Jewess, and also the Identity Card of the grandmother of the girl who lives with us in the Holy Land and who is registered in her Identity Card as a proper Jewess. What more could the Rabbinic Court desire as proof when a pretty and charming bride is involved? And after they believe me--and why should they not believe me?--I will prove to the honourable court that the girl is the daughter of a Christian mother and father, and the mother is a daughter of a Christian mother also, none of which ever converted to Judaism, and they have no intention of converting to Judaism. And then the Min. of Religious Affairs can claim that "the court did not investigate the matter in depth..." What depth? The depth is the Min. of Int. (the composers of the law of privacy, that is: they do not disclose to you any unpleasant detail to the Ministry), which relies on the religiosity of the Minister, who is responsible only to the Lord. But if he were required to be responsible to the Law of the State, then he would as an obedient citizen prevent these "mistakes", including the "mistake" of the well-known basketball player, ~~the~~ the mistake of the Russian Christian who served in the IDF as a Jew and one day said: Gentlemen, I've had enough of this ugly game. Let me live as a Russian Christian!" This is the depth! (FROM "SHELAMUT", the Organ of the Committee for the Integrity of the People.) END ARTICLE

DATE: 6.4.79 JOURNAL: "HATSOFEH" (HEB AM NRP) EXCERPTS FROM "YAD L'AKHILIM" REPORT (ENGLISH)
 QUOTE: Prof. K. ^{had} arrived at the Absorption Centre a few months ago when we first visited his home; his belongings still packed in crates, and they were surprised by our visit. Mrs. K. served in the USA as the choir leader in a Conservative temple but admitted to us that she had no deep ties to the prayers which she did not even understand. We explained to her that with her coming to Israel, she had the opportunity to insert a Jewish content to her life, and ^{we} even offered her a Hebrew prayerbook with English translation and books on Judaism.... When we made our third visit to this family, we found the parents in a most depressed state. They told us that their daughter who had arrived from the USA was caught in the university by the "JLWS FOR JESUS" sect, and their influence on her was tremendous, and they were fearful for her future. We spoke with the daughter, and she was invited to visit at an institution for Orthodox Jews...she was very impressed and explained that she had been ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~institution~~ ^{institution}

attracted to the Christian sect because she had not known Judaism. She has left Israel in order to complete her university studies while carrying with her a choice selection of books on Judaism which were loaned to her, and promised that she would return soon to make a more profound study of the heritage of her people....

After many years of activity the missionary centre of ~~XXXXXX~~ "Bnei E-l Zion" (sic.) sect in Azur has been closed. At this centre there were regular guests--families and individuals--from abroad who were enticed by the "prophet" Aharon Levy, who was arrested by the police on suspicion of using the rights of new immigrants and for false marriage declarations of his followers. The affair was exposed by the MAARIV reporter, with our organization providing much assistance by furnishing our findings about the sect which were gathered by us during a long period of time.

The activities of our division for the fight against the mission has enjoyed considerable momentum recently when during recent months alone there were more than 100 families dealt with who were in varying stages of contact with various missionaries. At the same time, the activities of ^{new} sects and missionaries have been exposed. In the newspaper MAARIV there was published the first in a series of missionaries with their address and their identity numbers, and this caused consternation among the circles of the Mission who prefer to work underground.

Special activities were undertaken in the matter of idolatrous sects arriving in Israel, and especially concentrating on purging out the ^{idolatrous} sect "Hare Krishna". In the streets of the towns where the sect is operating there have been published announcements appealing to the public to watch their children so that they should not be swept into this sect. END

DATE: 10.4.79 JOURNAL: "HAMODIYA" (HEB AM ~~XXXXXX~~ AGUDAT YISRAEL) NEWS ITEM

HEADING: "AGUDAT ISRAEL PROTEST MEETING AGAINST THE FINNISH MISSION IN TIBERIAS"

QUOTE : On the initiative of the Agudat Yisrael branch in Tiberias, last Sabbath there was organized a protest against the operation of the ^{Finnish} Mission which is spreading its tentacles in the city. The Finnish Mission has recently bought a house in the Kiryat Shmuel neighbourhood on Rehov Nashi, No. 1, under the pretence of "providing ^{community} services to the public, and appealed to the public to take part in the celebration of the "housewarming" which was scheduled to take place on a Sabbath afternoon. Agudat Yisrael in Tiberias, on the initiative of the branch Chairman, Simha Bonim Verner, set up a public committee headed by Rabbi Joseph Cohen, Deputy Mayor, Rabbi P. Cohen, Chairman of the Torah Circle, and public figures. The Committee published a proclamation to the public which exposed the true nature of the "Finnish House" and called for a protest meeting near the place at the time the housewarming was scheduled to take place. Hundreds of residents of the town took part in the meeting headed by the Town Rabbi Auerbach, Chairman of the Agudat Yisrael locally. Rabbi Verner, the central speaker at the meeting, stressed the gravity of the matter behind the pretence while the true ~~mission~~ purpose was to cause conversions through the Mission under the mask of "community services." Likewise, protest guards were set up throughout the Sabbath on the site. END

DATE: 16.3.79 ~~XXXXXX~~ JOURNAL: "ECHO OF THE KIRIYOT" (KIRIYAT MOTZKIN) LOCAL HEBREW ~~XXXXXX~~

HEADING: "ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE MISSION IN THE KIRIYOT" (SUBURBAN HAIFA) JOURNAL

BYLINE : A. Zvi Givon

QUOTE : "YAD L'AKHIM" recently disclosed missionary activity in the Kiriyot. At Kiryat Ata such activity became known to a community worker of the municipality who reported it to the organization. ~~From~~ ^{the} A father and son worked as missionaries and tried to influence new immigrants in the neighbourhood of "Neve Han" to lead them to conversion. After "Yad L'AKHIM" followed the "couple", they were warned, and the father and son left the place and moved to Jerusalem. Likewise, a new immigrant, known to be mentally ill, worked ^{as a missionary} in the same area, who has ultra-orthodox relatives in Bnei Brak. In this instance, it was not difficult for YAD L'AKHIM to prove the absurdity of the missionary's preaching for Christianity.

There is competition among the missionaries, who do their work for crass gain, and who have tried their luck also among new immigrants in Kiryat Yam and Kiryat Motzkin in the neighbourhoods in the north. They hold (for money) meetings in private houses, in many instances they disguise themselves as believing Jews, bring with them the Bible, and only at the end reveal their true colours when they distribute explanatory material and the New Testament. Also against this sophistication YAD L'AKHIM conducts, planting members among the missionary circles and succeeding to disclose their true aim. In Nahariya several missionaries were identified who worked underground with the aid of a nurse employed by Kupat Holim. After she was uncovered, she was warned by the organization, which also appealed to the Mayor to clarify her activity and in the event of non-response to cause her dismissal and expulsion from town.

MORE

"YAD L'AKHIM" is a nonpartisan organization, comprising mainly Yeshiva students who work mainly among new immigrants who have only slight notion of what is Judaism, and in depressed areas, in order to instruct them in the principles of Judaism. On the Sabbath before Purim there are special ^{intensified} activities undertaken against the seducers. END

DATE: 20.4.79 JOURNAL: "DAVAR" (HEB AM LABOUR) FEATURE ARTICLE

READING: "MISSIONARY JUDAISM"

BYLINE: Mordecai Barkai, "Davar" Correspondent in USA

QUOTE: Has there begun a flow of non-Jewish Americans to the conversion centres of Reform Jewish congregations? And if not a flow, then at least a stream or a trickle? Are there signs that this is arresting the demographic process of diminishing Jewry? And if not arresting, then at least slowing down? The Board of Trustees of the Reform Movement which will assemble soon for its spring 1979 session will have to respond to this. Then it will become clear, if not explicitly then by implication what is the fate of the decision taken during the winter session for a "conversion campaign". Will that also, like so many institutional decisions, remain hanging in midair, "doctrines which are the precepts of men," noncommittal, soon to be forgotten and replaced by new, ethereal ceremonious decisions? Or is something involved here which represents the commencement of significant happenings?

The proposal was presented before the leadership of Reform Judaism in America at its conference in Houston, Texas, on 2 Dec 1978. It was described as "an historic decision to overturn a custom of centuries by initiating a campaign aimed at converting to Judaism persons without any church affiliation." The decision was accepted unanimously. In actual fact, what is involved in the revolutionary proposal of one man, which is more than a proposal. It is a plan of action which is linked to historic roots and has a philosophic base.

The man, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, is not an isolated runner who has leapt onto the stage from the sidelines. He is a prominent establishment figure. For years ~~he~~ he has been the leader of the Union of Reform Congregations, comprising 735 synagogues altogether, and 1.2 million persons, ^{almost} almost half of the Jewish population of Israel. Up until a few months ago he was the chairman of the "Presidents Conference" of Jewish organizations in America—in effect, the ^{official} spokesman of organized Jewry in America in internal affairs, in relation to the general public, and in relation to the American Govt.

What has been especially surprising when the plan of Rabbi Schindler was raised has been the character of the response to it. Certainly! People responded. Especially in writing. There were those who opposed and those who favoured. But the rafters were not shaken, not among American Jewry, and not in Israel, and not in the world. If this had taken place 300 years ago, then it would have overshadowed the excommunication of Spinoza. This time it stirred up no storm. Is this because the issues which are able to stir up American Jewry are so few or are at zero point? Or is it because Rabbi Schindler gave expression, from an historical viewpoint, the longing and the practice, to a mainstream in Judaism? That indeed is the question.

In his office in the Union of Reform Congregations centre on Fifth Avenue in New York, confronting the basic question: What exactly do you want to achieve?, Rabbi Schindler finds it necessary to clarify carefully what he does not mean.

"First of all, I have not come to provide a justification for mixed marriages. I am opposed to mixed marriages, regret their occurrence, struggle against them. Secondly, I am not trying to suggest some kind of alternative to Jewish education as a means for strengthening Judaism. As the saying goes: "Lo am Ha'aretz hasid" (One ignorant of the Torah cannot be pious or righteous)." Nevertheless, despite the Jewish education provided by all the Jewish streams, mixed marriages represent the most prominent feature of the Jewish demographical situation. When it was measured between the years 1966-1972, it stood at 31.7%, and since then the rate has grown, not diminished. One out of every three young persons finds his mate outside of Judaism.

The rate of divorce amongst Jews is equal to that amongst the general population: 38% of the first marriages, and 42% of the second marriages break down. At the same time, the average number of children in a Jewish family stands at 1.4 less than the low average in the general population: 1.7 children per family, and this is certainly lower than the minimum needed to guarantee continued existence of the present status. This is a very hard forecast. On the basis of an optimistic appraisal American Jewry will decrease in the next century from 5.7 million persons to 3.5 million, and its weight in the general population will diminish by a far greater rate.

Intermarriages ^{are likely to} ~~will~~ take place among American Jews, says Rabbi Schindler, and will take place without a doubt, among my children, your children, and another's children. The phenomenon touches every stream of Judaism, both those without a Jewish education and

as well as those who have such background. People meet, are bound to one another, get married. "This is the sting which comes with the honey of a free and open American society." This is the demographic background. However, for Rabbi Schindler intermarriage is not the end of the issue but the beginning of a challenge.

About two-thirds of mixed marriages involve a Jewish male married to the non-Jewess, and about one-third involves a Jewess marrying a non-Jewish male. However, the rate of non-Jewish women marrying Jewish males is much higher (about 40%) that also marry into Judaism. They undergo formal conversion to Judaism, and the children of the couple are born, reared and educated as Jews. Among the non-Jews that marry Jewesses, only a few (3%) convert to Judaism.

Rabbi Schindler says: "My first recommendation touches those who have married Jews and have accepted the Jewish religion. Most of them are women. We do much to have them converted to Judaism, but neglect them afterwards. We forget that they have been severed from another faith, although not from their families. They are liable to be caught by conflicting emotions, especially on festivals which have a family character and which fall at the same time--Hanukkah & Christmas, Passover and Easter. We have to convert them not only to Judaism but also to draw them within, to show them a special radiance. We sin in that we humiliate them. In the best of cases we call them "giyoreth" (female convert to Judaism), in the worst and most shameful cases we call them "shiksas" (a pejorative term for a Gentile woman often used jocularly). But this contradicts the spirit of Judaism, it contradicts the halakha (Jewish religious law). From the moment a woman is converted to Judaism, she is a Jewess in every sense, and according to Maimonides she is entitled to say "our God and the God of our fathers." It is indeed absurd as well, since in most cases, the "shiksa" is more complete and kosher in her Judaism than is her husband."

The first recommendation, therefore, of the leader of Reform Judaism in America is: "Working out a detailed plan for affirmatively adopting those who have entered the Jewish religion." His second recommendation concerns the non-Jew in the mixed marriage, the person who has not converted to Judaism. "Listen, we have to go out of our way to prevent mixed marriages. But this is not to say that we must stand against those who have intermarried and against the non-Jewish parent in such a family. Look, he has already tied himself to the Jewish community. If it is at all possible, we must bring them into Judaism. And if it is impossible, then we should at least see to it that the children of such marriages will grow up as Jews."

Rabbi Schindler sees a tremendous potential to put the brakes on the diminishing American Jewish community. "Think about it: If two Jews marry and produce 1.4 children, there is no increase, there is a decrease, because two Jews leave behind only 1.4 Jews. But if a Jew marries a non-Jewess, there is an increase, because the one Jew leaves behind 2.4 Jews. What we must do is to reverse the trend, to make of mixed marriages once they have taken place, a source of Jewish increase and not a source of decrease." (TO BE CONTINUED)

SUBJECT TWO: HEBREW CHRISTIANS

DATE: 23.3.79 JOURNAL: JEWISH CHRONICLE (LONDON) NEWS ARTICLE

HEADING: "JEWS FOR JESUS NOT JEWISH"

BYLINE : Yoram Kessell, Jerusalem

QUOTE : Anyone who believes that Jesus was the Messiah must be considered a Christian and cannot qualify as a Jew for the purposes of the Law of Return, the Israeli Supreme Court has decided. The court reached its decision in a case involving Miss Eileen Dorflinger, 30, an American citizen who settled in Israel in 1977, and is seeking Israeli citizenship under the law. Born to Jewish parents, Miss Dorflinger joined the "Jews for Jesus" movement in the U.S. and was baptised a Christian. She still regards herself as Jewish, however, and had applied to the Supreme Court for an order against the Ministry of Interior which had refused to give her a permanent identity card and Israeli citizenship under the Law of Return. The law defines as a Jew anyone born to a Jewish mother or converted to Judaism, provided he or she is not a member of another religion.

The case revolved about two main points: the plaintiff's theological beliefs and whether she had been baptized. Miss Dorflinger maintained that she had not been formally baptized, but had "only immersed my body in water three times as an expression of purification." The court, however, rejected this contention, and accepted the Int. Ministry's account of her formal baptism in Connecticut in the spring of 1975. Miss Dorflinger was asked whether she regarded Jesus as the Messiah, and she said that she did. When further questioned as to whether she believed in the deity of Jesus, Miss Dorflinger's replies were considered evasive by the Court.

MORE

The court, composed of Justices Alfred Witkon, Meir Shamgar and Shlomo Asher, ruled that the question of whether a Jew was a member of another religion should be tested against the criteria of that religion and not against the tenets of Judaism. Since belief in Jesus as the Messiah was the basic tenet of Christianity, and since Miss Dorflinger had undergone conversion, the judges said, she could not be considered a Jewess and did not come under the provisions of the Law of Return. Mr. Uri Huppert, Miss Dorflinger's counsel, contended that in a democratic society it was no business of anyone what his client's religious beliefs were. All that counted was that she had a Jewish mother. Mr. Justice Shamgar replied that everyone in Israel had a right to his or her own beliefs since there was an official State religion enshrined in the law. However, the issue was whether the Ministry of Interior could be constrained to act contrary to the law and regard the plaintiff as a Jewess, when her beliefs clearly attested the opposite. Clearly, the Minister could not be so constrained.

END ARTICLE

DATE: (April) 4.4.79 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST (ENGLISH AM IND) FEATURE LAW ARTICLE (LAW REPORT)

HEADING: "DRAWING THE LINE BETWEEN JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY"

BYLINE : D ORIS LANKIN (PHOTO INSET: JEWS FOR JESUS, ONE OF THEM WEARING A STAR OF DAVID AROUND HER NECK.)

QUOTE : IN THE SUPREME COURT SITTING AS THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE BEFORE JUSTICES WITKON, SHAMGAR & ASHER: The High Court of Justice discharged an order nisi calling on the Minister of Interior to show cause why he should not grant the petitioner Israel nationality under the Law of Return. The petitioner was born in the United States to a Jewish mother. She came to Israel in 1977 and applied for citizenship under the Law of Return, which vests every Jew with the right to come to Israel as an immigrant and to acquire Israeli nationality. Her application was dismissed by the Min. Int. when he learned that the petitioner belonged to a sect known as "Jews for Jesus" and that she believed Jesus was the Messiah. The minister based his decision on his conclusion that the petitioner had changed her religion and therefore did not come within the definition of "Jew" in the Law of Return, that is, "a person born of a Jewish mother, or converted to Judaism, who has not adopted another religion."

The petitioner petitioned the High Court of Justice for an order nisi, claiming that she had never been formally converted to Christianity, and that she believed in Jesus the Messiah only because, in her opinion, he fulfilled the specifications for the Messiah as laid down in the Bible. She was granted an order nisi, and on the return day, Asst. State Atty Yarak appeared for the minister and Mr. Huppert and Mr. Eitan for the petitioner.

Justice Witkon, who delivered the main opinion of the High Court with Justice Asher concurring, said that he was prepared to assume, despite the evidence to the contrary, that the petitioner genuinely regarded herself as Jewish. He held, however, that the question of her religion is one of fact, and it is a function of the court, and not of the petitioner, to establish facts on the basis of available evidence. The question of whether the petitioner is a Christian, as the respondent maintains, or whether she is Jewish, continued Justice Witkon, must be resolved on the basis of Christian, and not Jewish, religious precepts. In this context, it is clear, he noted, from the information received by the respondent, which the petitioner had not succeeded in rebutting, that she had been baptized. This is acknowledged by all authorities to be an act symbolizing admission to the Christian faith. But what was more important was that the petitioner, in reply to repeated questions from the court as to whether she believed in the divinity of Jesus, had given evasive replies.

Justice Witkon then went on to discuss the question of whether a person who believes in the divine nature of Jesus can be deemed to be Jewish, referring in particular to the writings and opinions of Prof. David Flusser and Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver. He concluded that the prevailing opinion today, among both Christians and Jews, is that Jesus and his followers did not abandon the Jewish faith, and that those who believed in him and his messianic mission during his lifetime did not cease to be Jews. A turning point occurred, however, with the advent of Paul and his teachings, culminating in the eventual formulation and acceptance of the Holy Trinity and of Jesus as a God incarnate. It was this doctrine that placed Christianity outside the bounds of Judaism.

In short, held Justice Witkon, even if there were no other criterion for defining Christianity and for differentiating between that religion and Judaism, it is clear that any person who believes in the divinity of Jesus and in the Holy Trinity must perforce be deemed to belong to the Christian faith. As to the petitioner's beliefs, concluded Justice Witkon, she had evaded giving an unambiguous negative reply to the question of whether she believes Jesus to be a God incarnate or not. This reluctance on her part, plus the evidence to the effect that she had been baptized in the sacramental sense, and that she had been received into the church in the country of her birth, justified the respondent's decision to deny her nationality under the Law of Return. The order nisi should be discharged therefore. MORE

JUSTICE SHAMGAR: In concurring that the order nisi should be discharged, Justice Shamgar noted that under the Nationality Law, 1952, Israeli citizenship may be acquired in several ways, one of which is by way of "return." The petitioner, he continued, had been well aware of the fact that "return"--which is reserved exclusively to "Jews" within the meaning of the Law of Return, is not the only way of acquiring Israeli nationality or residence. Nevertheless, she had insisted on trying to persuade the respondent and the High Court that she was entitled to nationality by virtue of "return," although she had, of her own free will, and as she was perfectly entitled to do, elected to change her faith from Judaism to Christianity. In Israel, he stressed, in contradistinction to the position in most of the neighbouring countries, there is no statutorily defined state religion. Each and every person is entitled to practice his own faith without any fear of persecution. But freedom of religion does not entitle the petitioner to force her own novel definitions on the respondent (who is bound by the definitions laid down by law) to insist that he recognize her as Jewish despite the fact that she has adopted another faith.

ORDER NISI DISCHARGED WITH ILL2,000 COSTS. (JUDGMENT GIVEN ON MAR 15, 1979.) END ARTICLE

DATE: 20.4.79 JOURNAL: "AL HAMISHMAR" (HEL AM MAPAM) FEATURE ARTICLE
 HEADING: "THE WAY OF ROBERT M. TO ERETZ ISRAEL" (NB: NAME IS FICTITIOUS. FULL NAME IS WITH
 BYLINE: Avshalom Kava (PHOTO: JAFFA CHIMES) THE EDITOR, AS PER SUBJECT'S REQUEST)
 QUOTE: It is now twelve years that the Christian clergyman, Robert M., stands at the head of one of the churches in Israel. At present he is 45 years old, speaks fluent Hebrew, has an alert face, a bit ascetic, which bears the ~~marked~~ marks of a painful, enthralling and unfinished lifestyle whose beginnings are with an assimilated Jewish family in Nazi Berlin and its later/^{present}metamorphosis in the Land of Israel in Jaffa.

It was only in his late teens that Robert M. discovered his Jewish origin. His Jewish mother and his father (who also had some hazy Jewish roots) were married in Berlin in the year 1933. She was a dancer and his father was film director. Beside them was his maternal grandfather, a figure who had a decisive influence on his life. This Jewish grandfather served as a lecturer in jurisprudence in the University of Berlin during the years that the Weimar Republic was doing itself to death. From time to time grandfather published articles attacking the Nazis, which led to his being placed on a blacklist. The threats against the family increased, and the family removed to Czechoslovakia. In 1934 in one of the cities of the Sudeten region Robert M. was born into an uncertain and oppressive reality. His father was not reconciled to the status of a refugee and claimed that the threats were not so serious as the grandfather had determined. He returned to his family in Germany. Robert M. never saw him again. All trace of him was lost.

Wanderings follow wanderings. Czechoslovakia is "burning" and the family moves to Vienna, but here too the ground begins to shake under the feet of the family. Two years after their arrival in Vienna the grandfather journeys by himself to London in an effort to obtain the permission of the authorities to bring the other two. Permission is granted at the last moment. Mother and son leave on one of the last trains before the "Anschluss". (the Nazi unification of Austria and Germany in 1938. The) Upon her arrival in England, the mother makes the acquaintance of a Scottish teacher, whom she marries a short time later. The mother automatically acquires British citizenship while grandfather is pronounced "persona non grata" because of German nationality, and he is deported to Australia. The child is left without his beloved grandfather. The stepfather absolutely refuses to have the child live in his home.

From the age of three months onward, therefore, Robert M. is tossed about from one children's institution to another. The decree of the Scottish teacher ~~has~~ determined the fate of the child to be tossed about with only brief respites in a wearisome trek from one dormitory to another. Here his German identity was a sore spot, and he experienced a negative attitude from both the children and the staff workers. Nevertheless, the staff workers in these institutions, Robert relates, did want to help the abandoned children, but they did not know how. They did not have their own children and they lacked both personal and professional experience. Until the age of 16 he lived in this Victorian world. "If I had not experienced this myself, I would not have believed that this could happen in the England of the 1940s."

While he was still in Berlin, his grandfather had an inclination towards the teachings of Jesus, and the boy in the institutions where he spent long years of his youth soaked up Christian values. However, the decisive influence was in the last institution in which he was placed. This was clearly Christian, with the director and staff, most of whom were women, opening before him the door to this world. For many years he stood on the edge of this world, but it was only much later that he entered fully. His perplexity increased as he returned home from time to time on brief holidays, and learned the secretive details of his Jewish identity from chance remarks, ^{snatches} of conversations between his mother and

grandfather, who had in the meantime returned from his Australian exile.

When he turned 16, his Scottish stepfather agreed to his living at home. For a whole year he struggled to be a part of the family. Besides the effort to adapt himself, he had to become involved in the unsettled relationships at home. In good times, during evenings of poetry and song, the echoes of conversations about Jewish origins and German-Jewish culture would return again and again. A year after he had returned home he began to study at an engineering college. At the end of a five-year course of study he obtained his degree and began to engage in ~~theoretical~~ computer research. For two years he worked in the field of computer memory. In the early 1950s, when computer science was still in its infancy, a career lay open before him.

At the age of 20 he left home under a cloud of inner confusion, with a drive to unleash the anger he kept inside of himself towards the world, armed with dim, fragmented family memories...and a hunger for a healthy identity. "If I wanted to find a solution to my problems, I had to do it away from home."

Meanwhile, in the plant where he was employed there were ongoing discussions about religion and science. After a time he understood that the subject came up not by chance, but that it was part of a profound attempt to get a clear picture of ~~himself~~ the world and of himself. "Through these discussions I reached the stage in which I understood that I really believe in God. When I understood this, I searched for a ~~spiritual~~ ^{theological} ~~philosophy~~."

Little by little, not like the apostle Paul on the road to Damascus, he makes his way to the Christian religion. Because of the bitter experiences he had had, he was subject to severe doubts. "If ~~God~~ God exists, I thought, many times, then I don't want to know Him, since he had put me through these trials."

As he drew near to one of the important Christian denominations in England, there developed in him "a strange plant"...an aspiration to be a minister. In time the idea took shape, and he abandoned computer science and commenced his ^{theological} studies at the University of Cambridge, and afterwards in a special seminary for the priesthood. Strange, but in the framework of the seminary he met Jewish students, visited synagogues on weekdays and on the eve of the Sabbath, and made friends with many Jews.

While studying at the University of Cambridge, Robert M. took a trip to Israel. He ~~studied~~ ^{studied} ~~about~~ the land and spent two months in Kibbutz Lahav: "This was not an attempt to ~~study~~ ~~study~~ Judaism, but rather to become familiar with Jewish life firsthand. At the kibbutz they wanted to persuade me that Communism is the best way towards redemption." The visit to Israel, in the Holy Places, the double encounter with Jewish Israel and with the Christian Land of Israel left a deep impression upon him.

After a few years he made a second visit to Israel, and then made the acquaintance of the head of the local congregation in Jaffa, of the community of which he is a member. In the course of a conversation he learned that the man was about to leave his present position; so upon returning to England, he inquired of the possibility of taking up his position--and his request was granted. Thus, 12 years ago he arrived in Israel in order to lead the congregation, small in number, but very large and meaningful for him. In the whole range of relationships, however restricted, between Jews and Christians in Israel, he sees himself as A VESSEL TO ENCOURAGE THE IMPORTANT EXISTENTIAL QUESTIONS AND THE FURTHERANCE OF UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE PEOPLES.

After years of wandering, of a general and particular lack of clarity, he arrived in Jaffa, ~~xxxxxx~~ in a city with an abandoned port and history where he gains a certain degree of tranquility. But here, too, notwithstanding the force of the encounter between himself and the Land of Israel and that Jewish community dwelling in it, the years that are gone are not vanished from his sight. END ARTICLE.

SUBJECT THREE: EASTER SEASON OBSERVANCES

(NB: THESE WILL BE BRIEFLY SUMMARIZED BELOW)

DATE: 6.4.79 JOURNAL: JERUSALEMPOST NEWS ARTICLE

HEADING: "EASTERN CELEBRATIONS START ON SUNDAY"

BYLINE : ALAN ELSNER

A brief five-paragraph news article outlining celebrations of Easter beginning Palm Sunday among various Christian denominations with location of services. Readers are directed to Pilgrimage Division of Min. of Tourism and Govt Tourist offices for further information.

HEADING: "3,000 IN FESTIVE PALM SUNDAY MARCH" (JPOST 9.4.79)

Thousands of pilgrims and spectators, participate in Palm Sunday march. There is also a brief reference to the Palm Sunday Mass in St. Peter's Square, Rome, and chanting of Polish hymn by Pope ("The Day of Our Lord.")

DATE: 13.4.79 JOURNAL: AL HANISHMAR (HEB AM MAPAM) NEWS ARTICLE

HEADING: "UNPRECEDENTED EASTER PILGRIMAGE" BYLINE: Gabriel Stern

EXCERPTS: The Holy Week of the Western Christian communities will reach its peak today on the 1946th anniversary of the crucifixion of Jesus according to their tradition with a mass procession following the 14 stations of the via dolorosa in the Old City at 11.00. In view of the huge number of Christian pilgrims and tourists, unprecedented in recent years, the road which was closed due to collapse, was repaired in time by the Municipality of Jerusalem in an emergency project. (There follows a description of the expected Good Friday procession, Maundy Thursday observances ("which was actually a Passover Seder" of the first disciples and Jesus), the participation of various Israeli and consular officials in the ceremonies, and the confluence of Eastern and Western rites and the Jewish Passover.

"In the meantime the head of the Coptic community, Archbishop Anba, Dr. Basilus, has denied reports of renewal of Egyptian pilgrimages...and protested the recent decision of the High Court of Justice (in the conflict over status at the Holy Place with the Ethiopian Orthodox). It appears that the Copts hope to exert pressure in the wake of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in their favour..." END

DATE: 13.4.79 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST BYLINE: HAIM SHAPIRO

HEADING: "TRADITIONAL PROCESSION ON VIA DOLOROSA TODAY"

SUMMARY: Eight-paragraph summary of Holy Week observances beginning with Maundy Thursday "washing of the feet" ceremony, Good Friday route, Protestant and Catholic observances, Eastern Sunday observances, Eastern Palm Sunday rites. "The Garden Tomb's English sunrise service at 6.30 a.m. this year will include a brass quartet from the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra who have volunteered their services." English, German, French, Dutch, Finnish, Swedish, Welsh and Norwegian language services will be held throughout the day. END

DATE: 13.4.79 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST BYLINE: JAN GITLIN

HEADING: "WAY OF THE CROSS: JAN GITLIN DESCRIBES THE EASTER TREK ALONG VIA DOLOROSA

PHOTO INSET: CHRISTIAN PILGRIMS ON GOOD FRIDAY DEVOTIONAL WALK (RICHARD NOWITZ PHOTO)

EXCERPTS: Those who undertake a pilgrimage to the holy places may look forward to an emotional experience walking along Jesus' Way--also known as the Way of the Cross or the Way of Sorrow (Via Dolorosa in Latin)--in Jerusalem. What they may not know is that due to the accumulated debris caused by the wars and natural catastrophes of the past centuries and by sand blown in from the desert, the present Via Dolorosa is 8 to 10 metres higher than it was 2,000 years ago...consequently, the precise route Jesus took from the "courtroom" to the place of crucifixion outside the city is probably not identical to that which is generally accepted today. (There follows a description of the versions and development of the concept of the Via Dolorosa...Crusaders, Franciscan friars, influence of Passion plays...there is then given a description of each of the stations, what they represent in the history of the crucifixion, and the ceremonies and structures that are involved with each of the 14 stations leading to the final station where the tomb of the Holy Sepulchre is located.) END SUMMARY

DATE: 15.4.79 JERUSALEM POST

PHOTOGRAPH CAPTION: "CHRISTIANS CARRY A CROSS THRU' THE

HEADING: "PRIEST DISPUTES

TRADITIONAL ROUTE OF THE VIA DOLOROSA IN GOOD FRIDAY PROC-

ROUTE OF VIA DOLOR.") SESSION IN JERUSALEM'S OLD CITY"

QUOTE: A Benedictine priest says that the Via Dolorosa, which has drawn hundreds of thousands of pilgrims through the ages is not the route Jesus followed to his death on Calvary Hill nearly 2,000 years ago. Fr. Virgil Pixner, of Mt. Zion's Dormition Abbey, says the present trek, which cuts west across the Moslem and Christian quarters of the Old City, lies 400 metres north of where the real "way of the cross" was. Both the present-day route and the original one lead to Calvary Hill now enshrined by the hulking, stone Church of the Holy Sepulchre, along with the site of Jesus' burial. Fr. Pixner, who teaches Christian archaeology at the abbey's theological faculty, expounds his revolutionary conclusion in an article to be published in the forthcoming issue of "Christian News from Israel," a magazine published by the Religious Affairs Ministry. "Today's route is steeped in so venerable a tradition that no Catholic would consider altering it for the sake of historical accuracy," he says. "There can be no doubt, however, that the present 'Via' does not follow the path originally trodden by Jesus." Fr. Pixner says that the Via Dolorosa "migrated at least twice down the ages" to its present course, which was laid down by the Crusaders, because of mislocation of the Praetorium, where Pontius Pilate sentenced Jesus to die on the cross. END ARTICLE

DATE: 16.4.79 JOURNAL: AL HANISHMAR (HEB AM MAPAM) NEWS ARTICLE

HEADING: "EXEMPLARY ORDER AT RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES IN OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM"

BYLINE: Gabriel Stern

SUMMARY: This is a brief five-paragraph describing observances of Easter Sunday of Western communities, Israeli representatives, foreign consuls, pilgrims, tourists and spectators.

MORE

DATE: 16.4.79 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST NEWS ARTICLE PHOTO: "ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS MARCH
 HEADING: "EASTER & PALM SUNDAY OBSERVED) IN YESTERDAY'S PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION OUTSIDE THE
 BY THOUSANDS") CHURCH OF THE HOLY ~~XXXXXXXX~~ SEPULCHRE"

BYLINE: Haim Shapiro

SUMMARY: This is a four-paragraph news story about Easter observances among Western communi-
 ties and the commencement of Palm Sunday among Easterners...also a reference to the Ceremony
 of the Holy Fire in which "the faithful seek the privilege of being the first to receive the
 flame as it emits from the traditional tomb of Jesus." END

DATE: 22.4.79 JOURNAL: AL HANISHMAR (HEB AM MAPAM) NEWS STORY

HEADING: "MASS CELEBRATIONS OF 'SABBATH OF LIGHT' IN EAST"

BYLINE : Gabriel Stern

EXCERPTS: Yesterday afternoon the Easter ceremonies of the Eastern Christian churches reached
 their splendid peak at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre with the celebration of "Sabat A-Nur"
 ("Sabbath of the Light") in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. With joyful shrieks and
~~cries~~ ^{ear-splitting} cries of joy, the "Holy Fire" went forth from the tomb of Jesus....immediately after
 the fire went forth, it was distributed among 6,000 of the faithful, among them local Arabs,
 Greeks and Cypriots, and also 180 pilgrims from Roumania. The church which was previously
 in darkness (except for the television lights) became a sea of light. Decorum was exemplary
 despite the press ^{of the crowd} except for occasional quarrels among individuals over the right to receive
 the fire. The ceremony is conducted jointly by all the Eastern rites.... (The closing para-
 graph of this news story deals with the "colourful Ethiopian Easter ceremonies under the
 open sky headed by the new archbishop, 38 years old, Matthias...who (earlier) expressed
 the feelings of friendship that the people of Ethiopia have for Israel despite the political
 seesaw of events...at the ceremony 107 Ethiopian pilgrims took part in their national garb.)

END

SUBJECT FOUR: "CHRISTIAN ZIONISM"

DATE: 14.3.79 JOURNAL: ISRAEL NACHRICHTEN (TEL AVIV) GERMAN LANGUAGE FEATURE ARTICLE

HEADING: "CHRISTIAN ZIONISTS IN ISRAEL" BYLINE: S. Bein

SUMMARY: This is a three-column summary of a German-Christian Zionist movement "Emek Ha-
 Shalom", headed by Herman Bezner, a long-time adherent to prophetic interpretations of the
 Scriptures, beginning with the Russell movement which remained faithful to their founder's
 views (in contrast to the later offshoot, "Jehova's Witnesses" which changed its
 "Zionist" theology/eschatology). With his brothers and friends he ~~joined~~ ^{joined} in Germany "The
 International Union of Serious Bible Interpreters" and became involved with other non-Jewish
 supporters of the Jewish return to Zion. During the Nazi period they suffered at the hands
 of the regime, and after the war Bezner made frequent trips to Israel and Arab lands, and
 later founded "Emek Ha'Shalom", and works in close cooperation with Jewish and Christian
 supporters of Israel in contributing to the fulfilment of biblical prophecy.

DATE: 23.4.79 JOURNAL: AL HANISHMAR (HEB AM MAPAM) FEATURE ARTICLE

HEADING: "THE CHRISTIAN SISTERS WHO SETTLED IN ISRAEL" (STORY OF THE JERUSALEMITE SISTERS
 OF A GERMAN WHO PERISHED IN WARSAW)

BYLINE : Gabriel Stern

SUMMARY: This is the tale of ~~two~~ ^{three} German Christian women whose brother died in Warsaw during
 World War II after being wounded on the Russian Front. The father was permitted to attend
 the funeral of his son (who died of ~~unknown~~ blood poisoning), and arrived after the sup-
 pression of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt. Through a Polish sexton of a nearby church he learned
 of the horrors of the Ghetto and the plan to exterminate the Jews. After the war he became
 more interested in Zionism and the Jews, and while remaining a Believing Christian, observed
 Torah commandments such as Sabbath observance, and was removed from the official church.
 At his death he left (in 1957) his property to the Jewish National Fund. Four years ago his
 three surviving daughters emigrated to Israel and were given a flat in Talbieh, Jerusalem,
 and became an attraction to many Israelis and tourists because of their gentle and likeable
 personalities. "With all their ^{sense of} kinship to Jews and Judaism they did not convert to Judaism,
 but remained Christians believing in their Jewish Messiah," the writer concludes, "but they
 have submitted requests for Israeli citizenship. It is to be hoped that the authorities
 will look favourably at the sisters' request, who have tied their lives to Israel because
 of their father's last will and testament, the source of which was in the experience of
 the Warsaw Ghetto." END

DATE: 22.4.79 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST FEATURE ARTICLE

HEADING: "AMERICAN'S FIRST" BYLINE: Moshe Kohn

EXCERPT: In a way, (Morris L.) Abram's (former president of American Jewish Committee and
 Brandeis U.) statement (that American Jews are Americans first) is typical of the way most
 Jews, including many Zionists and Israelis, are embarrassed about the Biblical basis

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of their existence in general and in Eretz Israel in particular, and nod agreement when Pres. Jimmy Carter and others say impatiently that the Bible cannot be the basis for determining borders in the 20th Century. (Though, of course, the "New Testament" can be the basis of Christian counterclaims concerning Jerusalem, for example.)...In an exchange of letters a year ago, the editor of the genteely anti-Israel "liberal" Protestant American journal, "The Christian Century," the Reverend James M. Wall, who professes to be a long-time confidant of Pres. Carter, wrote me impatiently that Americans like them don't think that history and legalistics are really what count. "What we want is resolution," he asserted. It seems to me that that particular desire, as expressed by Rev. Wall, has less to do with any kind of morality than with America's desire for a continuous supply of Arab oil and political support in the world power struggle..." END EXERCPIS

SUBJECT FIVE: CHRISTIAN CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS

DATE: 6.4.79 JOURNAL: "YERUSHALTON" (HEBREW JERUSALEM WEEKLY) FILM REVIEW

HEADING: "THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MATTHEW"

QUOTE : (Showing at Cinematique) Ferer Paulo Pausolini is especially known by virtue of his erotic trilogy which included "Decameron," "Canterbury Tales" and "Arabian Nights". Very few people know that the Italian director won praise from Christian organizations and churches for the film in which he reconstructed the life of Jesus according to the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament. Pausolini created a very warmly human and poetic film by means of an exact reconstruction of the biographical aspects in the life of Jesus and by employing ^{the} original ~~max~~ ^{version of} the "New Testament." Jesus and the figures surrounding him are played in a very authentic manner by nonprofessional actors who embody figures reflecting the ordinary people. The result is far more impressive than the attempts of Hollywood to deal with the Biblical texts. Especially beautiful is the synthesis in the sound track of music of the Passions of Bach with the splendid blues of Odetta. This is the other side of the creativity of Pausolini--less commercial and provocative, but very faithful to the simplicity of the original.

DATE: 19.4.79 JOURNAL: ISRAEL NACHRICHTEN (TEL AVIV) GERMAN LANGUAGE ANNOUNCEMENT ^{END}

HEADING: ORGAN CONCERT IN JERUSALEM.

SUMMARY: This is a brief news item announcing two concerts of organ music in the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem.

DATE: 11.4.79 JOURNAL: HATSOFE (HEB AM NRP) BOOK REVIEW

HEADING: "THOSE WHO DEVIATED FROM THEIR SOURCE"

BYLINE : Y. Amos

SUMMARY: This is a ^{survey} ~~major~~ ~~part~~ of Prof. Flusser's recent work on the sources of Christianity, which follows closely Flusser's thinking. (See SELECTIONS No. 38, bot. p.8 through p.12 for excerpts from the book published in AL HAMISHMAR 1.10.78). Although the ^{major} ~~part~~ part of this survey reflects a traditionalist Jewish view of the negatives of Christianity or its lack of originality alongside the deviations from Judaism, the writer of the article concludes: "The conclusion of the researcher (Flusser) is therefore that there is no basis for the accepted form of investigation which sees strong Hellenistic influences at the beginnings of Christianity. The founders of this faith indeed added to its Jewish sources Hellenistic and pagan elements, Nevertheless, the entire phenomenon of primitive Christianity is to be explained rather by Jewish sources. In the opinion of the author, Christianity derived from the religious, Messianic and mystic ferment of the period at the end of the Second Jewish Commonwealth which led to a turning point in the history of the Jewish people and the entire human race." END

DATE: 13.4.79 JOURNAL: AL HAMISHMAR (HEB AM MAPAM) BOOK REVIEW

HEADING: "FIVE CHRISTIAN WRITERS--AND ISRAEL" BYLINE: Yehoshua Dash

SUMMARY: These are five brief book reviews of French-Catholic writers on Jewish and Judeo-Christian subjects: GEORGES HOURDIN ("The Gardeners of God"), PHILIPPE WARNIER ("The Faith of a Christian Revolutionary"), GILBERT CESBRON ("What is called living"), GEORGE SUFFERT ("Le cadavre de Dieu bouge encore"), MAURICE CLAVEL ("What I believe"). The reviewer expresses both surprise and interest in their lively and provocative approach to Jewish history and identity, especially those who are left-wing Catholics. He sees it as part of a general thawing out in the relationships between Jews and Christians.

He cites a Benedictine priest who is quoted in Suffert's book: "Everytime that something happens over there between the expanses of Sinai and the Sea of Galilee, my senses bristle. In the three or four thousands past years vital events have taken place there. Again and again the world has directed its attention to that tiny region, and many are waiting for some sign that will announce to them that an important chapter in the history of mankind is being written there in these very days." END