

SUBJECT NUMBER ONE: "THE MISSION"

DATE: 19.3.80 JOURNAL: SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH TIMES (JO'BURG) ARTICLE
 HEADING: "COUNTERING MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES"

QUOTE : A former South African, Johannesburg-born Rabbi Ziesel Swerdlow, is at present visiting the Republic to tell the South African Jewish community of the work of Peylim Yad L'Achim (Israel Torah Activists). Its activities include anti-missionary work, child school placement, running youth camps, visiting settlements, and supplying and printing educational and traditional literature in six languages. "The anti-missionary division," Rabbi Swerdlow told the Jewish Times this week, "has its hands full trying to counter the missionaries, who are, unfortunately, very active in Israel, operating under a cloak of secrecy offering material enticement to people in return for their converting to Christianity. "Paylim Yad L'Achim" basically operates in this field by amassing information on the missionaries. Many missionaries have been unmasked and their identities revealed. The organization also tries to get individuals already under the influence of the missionaries to sever their connection."

Rabbi Swerdlow, who is the son of Dr. & Mrs. J. Swerdlow of Jo'burg, left for Israel in 1972 to study at the Rabbinical College of Kol Yosef and followed this up by studying in various other yeshivot. He received Smicha (ordination) from Rabbi Avraham Farbstein, editor of the Talmudic Encyclopedia and Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Hebron. Rabbi Swerdlow, who is spending some 6 weeks in South Africa, is doing advanced rabbinical studies in Yeshivat Ohel Yosef in Askelon where he lives with his wife and little daughter. (END ARTICLE)

DATE: 28.5.80 JOURNAL: "THIS WEEK IN HAIFA" (NETANYA) HEBREW WEEKLY
 HEADING: "THE MUNICIPALITY WILL NOT YIELD TO THE THREATS OF THOSE WHO WOULD SELL THEIR LAND TO THE MISSION"

QUOTE : At an evening of Questions and Answers held at "Heichal Ha'haya", in which the Mayor, Yehiel Cahana, the Acting Mayor and his deputies, took part, Mr. Cahana noted that the Municipality would not yield to landowners who were threatening to sell to the Mission. It will be recalled that this journal sounded the alarm about two local citizens caught in a bureaucratic web in connection with permits for building on their lots who threatened to sell out to the Mission if the Municipality would not respond to their requests for building permits. The representative of the organization "Yad L'Achim" in town, Hayan Weinberger, whose job is to warn against the intentions of the Mission to take over land in town, asked during the Question and Answer session what the Municipality intended doing in this matter. The Mayor replied that those who are threatening to sell their land to Emma Berger would not receive any permit. "Neither ^{will} Emma Berger receive a building permit if she buys these plots," Mr. Cahana noted. According to him, if the representative of the Mission should build on these plots without a permit, the municipal inspection department will act. (END)

DATE: 23.5.80 JOURNAL: "THIS WEEK IN NETANYA" (NETANYA) HEBREW WEEKLY

QUOTE: The Netanya branch of the "Yad L'Achim" organization has joined the national struggle against the Mission, and as a first step called on the public to beware of the people of the meditation sect which, according to the organization, is trying to take hold in our town. (END)

DATE: 30.5.80 JOURNAL: "THIS WEEK IN NETANYA" (HEBREW WEEKLY) LETTER TO EDITOR
 HEADING: "WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN THE MISSION AND TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION?"

EXCERPTS: In the news selections of "THIS WEEK IN NETANYA" dated 23.5.80 I was surprised to read the item about the "meditation sect" which is a part of the activity of the Mission, against which the Netanya branch of "Yad L'Achim" has joined in the struggle. The International Society for Meditation in Israel is not a "sect". It is an Ottoman Society (non-profit) recognized by Israeli authorities as a public body whose activity is designed to instruct and to promulgate T.M. techniques to all sections of the public.... This technique does not involve any change of faith, life style, dietary habits, etc.... (There follows a description of the principles and practices of T.M. and alleged beneficial results.) It is therefore a pity that such a serious and respectable organization like "Yad L'Achim" (sic!) should take such a position (based on inaccurate or malicious information). In summary: The organization "Yad L'Achim" it would appear is comprised of religious persons. Many religious persons (MOHE)

among them respected rabbis employ TM to their own satisfaction... There is no contradiction between this natural technique and religion. The reverse is true...
 SIGNED: Dr. Daniel Glicker, International Society for Meditation in Israel.
 EDITOR: The news item in our journal did not refer to the International Society for Meditation, but to other organizations who employ meditation ^{advancing} for their own aims. END

DATE: 4.6.80 JOURNAL: "THE WEEK IN HADERA" (HEBREW WEEKLY) LETTER TO EDITOR
 HEADING: "YAD L'AKHIM" THANKS EDITOR FOR SERIES OF ARTICLES"

QUOTE : The Activists Organization, Yad L'Akhir, Hadera Branch, wishes to thank the Arnon Publishers for the series of articles on the subject of property acquisitions by the Mission in Hadera. It should be noted that I spoke with Mr. Yaacov Yagil and his wife, who had threatened to sell their property to the Mission if the Municipality would not respond to their demand for a building permit. From my conversation I was impressed about the housing distress which they were experiencing, and I understood that action must be taken to prevent them from making good their threats. SIGNED: Hayim Weinberger,
 YAD L'AKHIM HADERA.

DATE: 11.6.80 JOURNAL: "LATEST NEWS" (TELAVIV) YIDDISH JOURNAL
 HEADING: "SWASTIKAS ON CHRISTIAN BUILDINGS"

QUOTE : Swastikas and various insulting graffiti were discovered yesterday morning on the front of three buildings of Christian institutions in Jerusalem. On one it was written: "Enemies of Israel--Get out of here." Workers from the Municipality were called out in order to clean up the places. The Police have appointed an investigation squad to identify the culprits. Similar acts occurred several months ago. END

DATE: 11.6.80 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST (ENGLISH A.M. INDEPENDENT) PHOTO STORY
 QUOTE: A PASSERBY LOOKS AT ANTI-MISSIONARY SLOGANS THAT VANDALS PAINTED ON THE WALLS OF THE ETHIOPIAN CHURCH COMPOUND ON REHOV HA'HABASHIM IN JERUSALEM YESTERDAY. NEARBY CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOPS ON PROPHETS STREET & JAFFA ROAD WERE SIMILARLY DEFACED. THE MUNICIPALITY SENT CLEANUP SQUADS TO REMOVE THE PAINT. (ZOOM 77)

DATE: 12.6.80 JOURNAL: "AL HAMISHMAR" (HEBREW A.M. MAPAM) NEWS ITEM

BYLINE: "AL HAMISHMAR" Correspondent in Jerusalem

QUOTE : Dr. Eliad Peled, the Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, denounced sharply the hooliganism of extremist circles who soiled the fronts of Christian Bible shops on Jaffa Road and Prophets Street with insulting graffiti. Dr. Eliad Peled stressed that this irresponsible act of vandalism constitutes an attack upon our struggle for Jerusalem as Israel's capital city, where the holy places are diligently preserved, and where members of all religions may live with respect accorded their sensitivities, and with tolerance and security. "We cannot be reconciled," Peled added, "to such an act, as we cannot be reconciled to other acts of violence and hooliganism in the city on the part of any extremist body, and I hope that the guilty parties will answer for it to the full extent of the law." (END)

DATE: 13.6.80 JOURNAL: YEDIOT AKHRONOT (HEB PM IND) FEATURE ARTICLE

HEADING: "GRAFFITI ARTISTS CONTINUE THEIR WARFARE"

BYLINE : Gad Leor PHOTOS: ZOOM '77

CAP TIONS: (1) "Holy Scriptures" Centre in the picture serves as a Mission store. The slogans painted on this week don't exactly recall a Holy Scriptures style....(2) The Ethiopian Church also did not get off clean this week in this unclean warfare, but here the anonymous artists "exceeded themselves" and drew swastikas as well.

EXCERPTS: "GET OUT OF HERE, ENEMIES OF ISRAEL," "WE'RE ALL PLO," "THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL LIVE'S," "LEGAL HASHISH," "BRING BACK KAWASSMA," "BEGIN RESIGN"--these are only a tiny portion of the graffiti and slogans which have recently been decorating dozens of houses, walls, and even monuments in both sides of Jerusalem. The drawing of graffiti, political, obscene, and even vitriolic--has become a system of operation among groups and persons from all streams. The inscriptions which turned up this week on Christian institutions in Jerusalem are actually one link in a long chain of graffiti and inscriptions and drawings throughout Jerusalem. In East Jerusalem flags of Palestine were drawn and in the West the symbols of the "ach" (Rab. Cahana) movement, as well as obscene drawings of the genitals. On the front of one Christian institution in the centre of town swastikas were drawn. (MORE)

"Those who besmirch the streets of the city are not only a handful of extremists expressing what they are unable to express in more civilized ways," a police official in Jerusalem stated this week. Meanwhile, the municipality again denounced the attacks upon Christian religious institutions just when Israel again declared that there was freedom of worship and religion in Jerusalem for members of all religions... (The article then discusses other forms of non-religious graffiti.) Those who defile the walls of churches and ^{Christian} religious shops are nothing more than ultra-orthodox fanatics or right-wing extremists. The police suspect, among other things, that immigrants from the USSR, former "prisoners of Zion", are responsible for the painting of graffiti on the Russian Church in the city and characterized the dwellers there as "KGB emissaries."

The Jerusalem municipality again and again denounces the phenomenon and has demanded a massive operation on the part of the police against it, and the latter have indeed taken a very serious view of the issue. The Southern District Commander, Cdr. Aryeh Ibzan, even set up a special team headed by a senior officer more than a half year ago to keep close tabs of graffiti in Jerusalem and to arrest the "artists." Nevertheless, it appears that it is difficult to trap the graffitiists; and as one police officer remarked: "It's impossible to watch over every wall, stone and sidewalk in Jerusalem." Thus, the "artists" in their various kinds succeed in besmirching the city, among other things, with dark colours which are ineradicable, while taking almost no risk on themselves.

DATE: 15.6.80 JOURNAL: "HATSOFEH" (HEB AM NRP) (END EXCERPTS)

HEADING: "THE PEOPLE OF THE MISSION HAVE EXPANDED THEIR ACTIVITY"

BYLINE: Eli Alon

QUOTE: The people of the Mission have recently expanded their operations in Israel. It has been learned that they have begun to send to hundreds of people throughout the country "a personal letter" containing missionary propaganda. The names of the recipients have apparently been taken from the telephone directory. At the same time, the missionaries continue to send the New Testament under the guise of sending the Bible ("Tanach") on demand in exchange for a nominal sum. (END)

DATE: 26.6.80 JOURNAL: "HATSOFE" (HEB AM NRP) LETTER TO EDITOR

HEADING: "MUST THE SICK BE HOSPITALIZED IN CHRISTIAN HOSPITALS?"

QUOTE: While strolling about the streets of Jerusalem on Shabbat, I saw a poster which stated that in Jerusalem there no Jewish hospital for the chronic cancer patient, only the French Hospital, which astonished me. How can it be that the capital city of the State of Israel under the leadership of the Likud party the Jewish patients must be hospitalized in a Christian hospital? Where is our nationalism?... My question is: What is occupying the men of Torah all day? What are they doing that they cannot take the matter into their hands on behalf of the sick of the city so that these will not have to be hospitalized among Gentiles? We haven't heard of them doing any thing. SIGNED: Haya Esther

Agasi, J'lm

DATE: 27.6.80 JOURNAL: YEDIOT AKHROT (HEB PM IND)

HEADING: "OFFICIALS FROM WELFARE DEPARTMENT REMOVED GIRL FROM THE MISSION"

SUBHEAD: "Planning to give her up for adoption--but mother, a nude model, says: 'I will do everything to see that they don't take her from me.' Hearing in court next week."

PHOTO: THE MODEL ANNA HILELI AND HER DAUGHTER

BYLINE: Yehezkiel Adiram, "Yediot" Correspondent

QUOTE: The Tel-Aviv District court is about to hear next Tuesday the argument of the nude model Anna Hileli against the petition of the Welfare Dept for giving her daughter up for adoption. Anna Hileli, unmarried, bore the daughter about four years ago to an African student. Some time after the birth of the child, the student left the country and the two were left without support. Anna Hileli became a nude model in order to support herself, and because of her work could not properly take care of her daughter. For this reason she turned the child over to the Mission. According to Anna Hileli, she had the option of reclaiming her child whenever she could, and she did intend doing so when she had earned enough to buy a flat. However, the Welfare Dept did not believe her story, and were convinced that the child was given to the Mission permanently, and therefore decided to remove her from there and give her up for adoption. Since they did not know where exactly the child was, they engaged in some "detective work" and after extended investigation

(MORE)

they found the child in the Mission in Jerusalem. The child was removed from thence and conveyed to a foster family. At the same time, the Welfare Dept submitted to the District Court in Tel-Aviv a request for a determination that the mother is unable to keep her child, had abandoned her, and therefore the child should be put up for adoption. Additionally, it was stated in the request that the welfare of the child in every sense requires that she should remain under the supervision of the Welfare Department.

The child's mother opposes the demands of the Welfare Dept. Through an attorney, Moshe Anbar, she argues that "I love my daughter. I want her with me, and I am prepared to do everything, only that they don't take her from me." Yesterday she told me that it was almost certain that her friend will be returning from Africa to Israel and will fulfil his pledge to marry her. "Then I'll be able to raise a family in Israel and there will be a good home for my daughter," she said. (END)

DATE: 26.6.80 JOURNAL: "HA'MODIYA" (HEB AM AGUDAT YISRAEL)

HEADING: "JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SPONSORING LAW AIMED AT CURBING PURCHASES OF THE MISSION."

SUBHEAD: "A MEMORANDUM CIRCULATED IN THE MATTER OF ^{LAND} PURCHASES IN ISRAEL... RELATING TO FOREIGNERS"

BYLINE : "HA'MODIYA" Correspondent in the Knesset

EXCERPTS: The Justice Dept has circulated among Govt departments a memorandum relating to the purchase of land in Israel by foreigners. The essence of the memorandum is a proposal for a law resembling parallel laws in the West which subject land purchases by foreigners to "certain conditions". This proposal will be laid before the Knesset and will be a "genuine confrontation" with the kind of land purchase by the Mission such as the Christian sect of Emma Berger.

The matter of the proposed law being prepared by the Justice Dept was disclosed the day before yesterday at a plenum session of the Knesset by Shmuel Tamir, the Minister, when he replied to the parliamentary query of MK Dov Shilansky of the Likud. The latter sought to clarify the activity of the Justice Dept ~~in connection with~~ ^{against} the Emma Berger sect, which was buying land "in Israel in huge proportions." He detailed the places where the sect had purchased lands throughout Israel--in Tevarya, where it had recently obtained 400 dunams, in Carmel, in Bat Galim, in Binyamina, and especially in Zicron Yaacov....(There follows a description of a somewhat heated exchange between the Minister Tamir and Shilansky over an allegedly too "formal" response to the query.)

Minister Tamir stressed at the plenum that the proposal for the new law was the result of "much thought" invested by the Department of Justice. On the one hand, the proposed law protects free commercial enterprise of every citizen, resident or alien, and on the other hand it protects State assets. The proposal has been circulated, the Justice Dept will be receiving comments and reactions, and the law will be submitted to the Knesset. This will be a genuine confrontation with the kind of expansionism of the Mission, the minister concluded. (END)

DATE: 27.6.80 JOURNAL: "KAVL HA'IR" (HEBREW JERUSALEM WEEKLY) LETTER TO EDITOR

HEADING: "MISSIONARY MATERIAL"

QUOTE : We were privileged to be among the recipients of "the yellow packages" which contain missionary material, which has arrived in Israel and Jerusalem from Canada. We were shocked at the insolence of Mrs. Bruce, promulgating this poisonous material among our brethren of the House of Israel. Some of the recipients may be of weak faith, and this material is liable to affect them. It seems to us that those responsible in the Ministry of Communications should react. (END)

SIGNED: Dr. Daniel Shuraki, Rishon Yam Suf, 17, Ramot Eshkol.

DATE: 6.7.80 JOURNAL: "YEDIOT AKHRONOT" (HEB PM IND)

HEADING: "PRIVATE DETECTIVES: AND WHAT NEXT?"

BYLINE : Shulamit Aloni

EXCERPT: Every humiliating and prejudicial act which defies natural justice, when it is legitimized by legislation under the Coalition steamroller, becomes acceptable among us as the norm, and not a peep out of anyone, since after all the authority of law must be maintained! So it was with the population registry with its specific characterization of nationality for persons whose mothers had not converted to Judaism. So it was with the "blacklists" of ineligible for marriage (MORE)

and the ill-famed Mission Law which has caused such damage to the State of Israel in the wide world more than its dubious "defence" against missionaries, etc. (The balance of the article deals with the law concerning recruitment of women for the IDF and the subsequent employment of private detectives to discover whether the young women claiming exemption from military service on the grounds of a religious lifestyle are indeed telling the truth.)

DATE: 7.7.80 JOURNAL: "YEDIOT AKHRONOT" (HEB PM IND)

HEADING: "REGISTERED THEIR CHILDREN IN THE MISSION IN RESPONSE TO THE CLOSING OF THE SCHOOL IN OR YEHUDA"

SUBHEAD: "FED UP THAT HERE NO AID IS GIVEN. IN THE MISSION, LIFE IS EASIER"

BYLINE: Sima Ela, "Yediot" Correspondent

EXCERPT: Parents from Or Yehuda have enrolled their children in the Christian mission in Jaffa in protest of the decision by the local Council to close the school "Hillel" where their children had studied until now. Shoshana Basha, a mother of 8 children, who has enrolled two of her children in the Mission, stated: "After the Council decided to close the school without taking into consideration our opinion in the matter, 7 parents took a taxi from Or Yehuda and traveled to the Mission in Jaffa and enrolled our children. There they'll learn English, French, Hebrew and Arabic. They'll also learn the Christian Bible. This doesn't ~~bother~~ bother me. Why should it bother me? We're fed up that here we get no help. With them (the Mission) life is a lot easier."

When the group of parents that had gone to the Mission to enrol their children returned, another group of ten parents went in their footsteps also seeking to enrol their children. The parents of the children at the Hillel School which is about to close down had tried to exert pressure on the Council to cancel its decision. They held a demonstration about three months ago and last week made a tumult at a Council meeting, but to no avail....

Council Head Yitzhak Bocovza, asked to respond, stated to me: "For my part they can enrol their children in the Mission. I will not change my mind. At the Hillel School there are only 120 children studying, and there is no justification for keeping a full staff for so small a number of students, which in time will decrease. I'm aware of the fact that the standard of studies in the "Urim School" (to which the Hillel School children have been transferred) is low, but that is the situation." (END)

DATE: June 1980 JOURNAL: "Z'RAKOR" (HEBREW)

HEADING: "WARNING: THE MISSION IN OPERATION"

QUESTION: WHAT IS THE ACTIVITY OF THE MISSIONARIES? DO THEY KIDNAP CHILDREN?

Zuri Danon, Teverya Haim Fishman

ANSWER: The missionaries engage in every possible activity in order to convert adults and children. Therefore they try to influence broken or weak families where relationships are bad, and they exert their financial and "spiritual" influence. They don't kidnap children in the simple sense of the word inasmuch as this is forbidden according to the laws of the State, but they do kidnap children in the spiritual sense; that is, they convince parents in the matter of "the good education" they provide in their schools, the broad education such as multilingualism, etc. etc. In this manner they trap children into their schools and lead them into apostasy. May the LORD frustrate their council! (END)

DATE: Issue No. 11, 1980 JOURNAL: "THE ULTRA-ORTHODOX CAMP" (JERUSALEM) HEBREW

HEADING: "ADVANCED 'CHRISTIAN' STUDIES FOR TEACHERS IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL"

BYLINE: Yosef Ben-Hayil

QUOTE: A parliamentary query in the Knesset to the Orthodox Minister of Education recently brought to our attention a phenomenon which is well-known, to our sorrow and shame. The query concerned information which has recently come to be known through "Yad L'Akum" activists concerning the fact that the College for Education named for David Yellin is conducting advanced studies at a monastery in Jerusalem. This is nothing new, and is something accepted since the foundation of Zionism as is expressly stated in the writings of the proclaimer of Zionism during his visit to the Pope, who notified him: "If my lord will bring his Jews to Palestine, we will establish churches there and baptize them all." If that man had foreseen the situation well, he could have replied: "My lord, there is no need to establish them among us. We will just send our youth to you." The inferiority feelings of those "delicate" Jews exceeds all bounds, in every legal framework which touches on Jewish (MORE)

issues, and especially when it relates to the uniqueness of the Jewish people. Only recently we have learned about the submission of a law which would forbid the raising of "another thing" (i.e. swine TRANS), and already they are pouring out their rage on religious Jewry, since such a law would underscore the distance which separates Judaism and Christianity. (There follows a tirade against "that sect which has spread its faith throughout the world.")

It is therefore sevenfold astonishing to learn about Jews completing their studies at a Christian monastery, and all the more so when an Orthodox Jewish minister heads the Ministry of Education. And perhaps this hints at the traditional educational sources which are about to be introduced among us--traditional education with the sharp aroma of Christianity. The accursed generation of the Enlightenment (the Jewish 18-th-19th Century Haskala movement) which did not envision a third Jewish generation...has arisen anew and threatens to renew its activity. (There follows another tirade against Zionists, the Pope, the use of the Star of David since it became a symbol of the heretic Zionists, etc.) The fact of teachers completing advanced studies in a monastery and especially in the Holy City of Jerusalem is a frightful event which exceeds all good taste, and the obligation of the people of the LORD, the Chosen people, the peculiar people, is to explain this with greater power and effect. (END)

DATE: 13.6.80 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST (ENGL AM IND) FEATURE ARTICLE

HEADING: "THE DANGER OF MASOCHISM"

BYLINE : Dr. Yehuda Bauer, Professor of Holocaust Studies at Hebrew University
EXCERPTS: P.M. Menahem Begin's speech in the Knesset on June 2nd included a clear didactic element: All the European countries, with the exception of Denmark, had by and large cooperated with the Nazis and turned Jews over to them, said Mr. Begin. In a recent interview with a Dutch paper Mr. Begin was quoted as saying that he would never put his foot on Polish soil because not more than a hundred Poles had saved Jews--all the others had cooperated with the murderers. A once-popular, now happily defunct pop group, which was known as the Dizengoff Command Group, made the same point in one of its more inane songs which proclaimed that "the whole world is against us, never mind, we shall overcome." The whole point, of course, is that quite enough of the world is against us, but if all of it were, we could not possibly overcome. Our prime minister is desperately trying to convince those in the world who may still waver, to turn against us; he is misusing Holocaust history for that purpose, and never mind the facts....

In virulent antisemitic Roumania, the Jews in the central parts of the country were saved from death by careful calculations of Rumanian national interest. But our P.M. put everyone and everything in the same pot. France, where over 200,000 out of the 300,000 Jews were saved, very largely through a combination of Jewish initiative and popular French willingness to save them....Belgium, where a clear stand by the Belgian government-in-exile against antisemitism combined with distaste of Nazi occupation by the overwhelming majority to save close to 60% of Belgium's Jews. Holland, where despite difficult topographical conditions, 24,000 out of 140,000 Jews hid with the local population...Italy, where the Fascist puppet republic set up by the Nazis in the north failed to hand over the Jews because of the massive resistance of the Italian population--about 5/6 of the Jews of Italy were saved. Bulgaria, where members of the ruling Fascist elite combined with the Orthodox Church and the Communist underground to prevent the deportation of Bulgaria's Jews...The truth of the indifference or hostility of the majority of populations in a number of countries other than those just mentioned is bad enough...but there was also an important minority (in Poland)--we do not know how many thousands--who helped....There is a deplorable tendency to universalize the Holocaust out of recognition and deny the uniqueness of the Jewish fate. On the other hand, there is a growing chauvinist masochism which is reflected by Mr. Begin and the Dizengoff pop group--well, they are all against us anyway, so why bother. This attitude, combining ignorance with myopia, is undercutting the Jewish position in the world, offering an easy way out for guilty European consciences by lopsided statements. A better knowledge about recent Jewish history might help; ignorance can be cured, at least in theory, provided there is a will to open one's eyes.

(END EXCERPTS)

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SUBJECT NUMBER TWO: CHRISTIAN ZIONISTS

DATE: 30.5.80 JOURNAL: "KOL HAIFA" ("YE DIOT AKHRONOT" SUPPLEMENT) HEBREW

HEADING: "FATHER ELIAS: CONVERT AND ZIONIST"

BYLINE : Ariela Reuveni-Rihan PHOTO: Fr. Elias

QUOTE : In the monastery of the Carmelite Order on Mt. Carmel, which will soon be observing the 350th anniversary of its founding, there live permanently 12 monks, two of them being of Jewish origin: Fr. Elias Friedman, a physician by profession and a native of Capetown, South Africa; and Brother Daniel, a native of Poland, a Holocaust survivor. Their way of life and world outlook of these two Jews who wear dark brown frocks and shod in sandals, is as different as night and day. The thing that unites them is their decision to change their religion in the wake of the horrors of the Holocaust which left their minds wounded and aching, and their desire to preserve their ethnic identity and their strong bonds with the Jewish people who, according to them, are the Chosen People.

Fr. Elias is an intellectual who devotes all his free time to historical and theological research and to writing poetry. Just now his book, "The Latin Recluses on Mt. Carmel," in a deluxe edition of the Historical Institute of the Carmelite Order in Rome, has been published. In addition, a series of additional investigations has been published, among them an investigation into the precise location of the Church of St. Margaret, and a study of 150 pages on the subject of Jewish identity. In this study, in which Elias sought to illuminate the problem from various aspects, he aimed to reach especially the Christian world, he states. Elias is also working on the translation of the poems of the South African poetess Olga Kirsch, who now lives in Rehovot, from Afrikaans to English. Father Elias is especially proud of the variations he composed on the poetry of Bialik.

I spoke with Fr. Elias in the guest room of the Carmelite Monastery at Stella Maris. He speaks a fluent Hebrew with a heavy South African accent. His face is broad and somewhat pale. His blue eyes ^{are} set in a framework of thick black eyebrows with a thin line of sadness drawn over them; his hair is streaked with grey, and from time to time he shuts his eyes, puts the palm of his hand on his high brow and is sunk in thought.

Born into a lower middle class Jewish home in Cape Town, he grew up in a good Jewish-Zionist household. At 15 he himself joined the Zionist movement, studied Hebrew and was especially interested in the teachings of Ahad Ha'am and Herzl. Already in his youth he did not agree with Herzl's way of thinking. On the other hand, in the teachings of Ahad Ha'am's cultural Zionism he found several points he could take hold of, although here also he discovered inadequacies. According to him, there is no clear definition in the teaching of Ahad Ha'am of "Who is a Jew", and this in his opinion is a great lack.

A passion to investigate the sources of faith prevailed over the young Jew in South Africa, especially during the time of the Holocaust. The suffering of the Jewish people being led as sheep to the slaughter without the enlightened nations of the world doing anything to rescue them caused a profound spiritual trauma in him. He enlisted in the South African forces and served as a Medical Officer. The piercing question--why does God do nothing to prevent the awful suffering which has befallen the Jewish people for 2,000 years--gave him no rest. "Suddenly, the idea flashed into my mind that the Jewish people had erred in not accepting the Messiah--Yeshua--which led to a frightful complication of history. I'm not speaking of the Crucifixion, but of the fact that the nation refused to accept him as the Son of God. I believed that I had found the ^{cause} ~~reason~~ for the Jewish problem, and I decided to become a Christian."

The family of Elias was shocked to hear of his decision and tried to influence him to relent, but he stood firm. In 1943 he was baptized and went to Europe. He studied theology, philosophy, mysticism and languages, and accepted joyfully the proposal to join the order on Mt. Carmel, seeing in this a successful combination of patriotism and religion. The concern for ethnic identity was and remains to this day a basic factor in his life. He concedes that a Jew who converts to Christianity has no right to be called a Jew, but in his opinion he has the right to be called a son of Israel or son of the Hebrews.

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Under the influence of Bialik and Hlike Fr. Elias began to write poetry. Many of his poems are sad and reflect chapters in his life story. "Betty must be pure and purifying, nourishment for the soul," he says. Fr. Elias from the heights of the Carmelite monastery follows with interest and personal involvement the life of the country and feels the pain of the negative aspects of our life. He is especially grieved over the phenomenon of emigration from Israel. "I will not emigrate to South Africa. I will remain here until the end of my life," says Father Elias Friedman, who is bound with every chord of his soul to the Land of the Fathers. (END)

DATE: 6.6.80 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST (ENGLISH AM IND) EDITORIAL

HEADING: "SPOILING THE LAND"

EXCERPT: Professor Walter Clay Lowdermilk, the great Christian believer in Zionism, who inspired so many of Israel's major water projects, justified his support of the Israelis because they obeyed what he called the 11th Commandment. This, as he enunciated it, was the duty to be a faithful steward of the good earth. He approved of the Jewish redemption of marshlands and deserts, that fight against soil erosion, the careful husbandry of water and soil. That was in the days before Israel was forced to industrialize at great speed so as to absorb hundreds of thousands of immigrants...Somewhere a balance has to be struck between the need to progress and the need to conserve...we can not lay waste and then move on, as American pioneers did after ravaging the prairies. We have nowhere else to go: here is our journey's end. (END EXCERPTS)

DATE: 26.6.80 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST (ENGL AM I ND) LETTERS TO EDITOR

HEADING: "IN SUPPORT OF HARRY HURWITZ"

QUOTE: As a Christian Zionist leader, may I respectfully support the appointment of Harry Hurwitz as Information Minister for the U.S.A. Mr. Hurwitz is unique in contact, appreciation, openness and ability in dealing with Christian Zionists who form a large, influential and potentially powerful bloc of support for Israel numbering 60 million. Mr. Hurwitz's five years' exposure (3 years in South Africa and 2 years in Israel and the U.S.) to Christians supporting Israel (Christian Zionists) will prove of invaluable assistance to Israel in troubled years ahead. As the U.S. is the home of 80% of the 60 million, what better place for him? The thoughts and prayers of many Christians who know, respect, and have high regard for Mr. Harry Hurwitz are with him and the Israel Government at this time. SIGNED: BASIL JACOBS, CHAIRMAN, CHRISTIAN ACTION FOR ISRAEL, SOUTH AFRICA

QUOTE:

As an annual visitor to Israel, a devoted Christian Zionist and a subscriber to THE JERUSALEM POST, I was totally dismayed at a recent article describing Mr. Harry Hurwitz as a failure in his present post. I have been personally acquainted with Mr. Hurwitz for almost two years and, during that time, have found him an excellent spokesman for your nation. Recent trips to my country by Mr. Hurwitz have won him accolade as a highly capable spokesman and representative of your nation and its people. He knows how to sell Americans on Israel--particularly fundamental-Evangelical Christians, from whom your strongest support is coming and will come. SIGNED: HILTON SUTTON, J'LM

DATE: 2.7.80 JOURNAL: "MAARIV" (HEB PM IND) NEWS ARTICLE

HEADING: "WALDENSIAN CHURCH RECOGNIZES THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ISRAEL OVER JERUSALEM"

BYLINE: Ada Luccani, "Maariv" Correspondent in Rome

QUOTE: "We are prepared to recognize any sovereign or legal government in Jerusalem provided that they assure free access and freedom of worship to all religions in the spirit of religious pluralism. For this reason, the Government of Israel is acceptable to us as sovereign over Jerusalem." This position was expressed by an authorized representative of the Waldensian Church on the subject of Jerusalem which was published the day before yesterday.

The Waldensians are members of one of the most ancient Protestant denominations in Europe, having severed their ties with the Catholic Church already in the 12th Century--some 300 years before the schism effected by Martin Luther.

In Italy they number 30-40,000 persons. With respect to the portion in the Vatican declaration which alleged to speak on behalf of all the Christian sects, the Waldensian representative stated: "The Catholic Church is not authorized at any time to speak in the name of the other Christian churches." (END)

SUBJECT NUMBER THREE: CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

DATE: 22.2.80 JOURNAL: JEWISH JOURNAL (BROOKLYN N.Y.) ENGLISH ARTICLE

HEADING: "CLERIC SAYS PROTESTANT CHURCHES ARE ANTI-ISRAEL"

(SEE SELECTIONS No. 80, page 11, same date, headed "ONE SIDED VIEW")

DATE: 7.3.80 JOURNAL: JEWISH STANDARD (JERSEY CITY N.J.) ARTICLE

HEADING: "PROTESTANT-JEWISH LINKS STRAINED"

(SEE SELECTIONS No. 80 Page 11-12 headed "PROT. JEWISH TIES STRAINED")

DATE: 25.4.80 JOURNAL: JEWISH NEWS (DETROIT MICH.) FEATURE ARTICLE

HEADING: "ANTI-ISRAEL EFFORTS IN CHURCHES" "BETWEEN YOU AND ME"

BYLINE : Boris Smolar, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus, JTA.

QUOTE : Since the dramatic visit of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem, public opinion polls show that pro-Arab sentiments have been growing among Americans. It is not that their sympathy for Israel has diminished; they still want to see Israel secure in its borders. But they were impressed with Sadat's move and took it as an indication of his desire for peace with Israel.

Today cadres of hundreds of church professionals in the various denominations of the Protestant church are engaged in promoting pro-Arab and anti-Israel sentiments. They are considered as "experts" on Arab-Israeli problems. They come with a background of missionary, philanthropic and educational service in the Arab Middle East where their denominations have long been involved in work with universities, secondary schools, social service centers and refugee aid projects. They now hold staff positions in the National Council of Churches of Christ and in the Middle East departments of their denominations. They exert significant influence within the organized Christian community and in church institutions. They are the drafters of Pro-Arab and anti-Israeli resolutions for conventions of church groups. They recommend lecturers for churches. They provide churches with material on the Middle East. They seek to win American public sympathy for their views through religious channels. They advocate American recognition of the terrorist Palestine Liberation Organization which has committed itself to the destruction of Israel.

The most active anti-Israel staff members can be found in the United Presbyterian Church, the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church, the Reformed Church of America, the Quakers and the Mennonites. The Quakers have published an article in their organ "Quaker Life" hostile not only to Israel but also to Jews. A somewhat similar situation prevails in the Catholic community. Some of the Catholic church leaders with a background of philanthropic and educational service in Arab countries actively promote anti-Israel propaganda. Outstanding among them is Father Joseph L. Ryan, who was connected with universities in Beirut and Baghdad and is a member of anti-Israel organizations in this country.

THE ARAB-AMERICAN COMMUNITY: Despite the intensified propaganda against Israel conducted in the church community by church professionals, the support for Israel is still broad. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops has affirmed the right of Israel to live in security. So did the major Protestant denominations. Even the National Council of Churches, a Protestant group which is strongly pro-Arab and seeks U.S. recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization, recognizes Israel's right to exist as a sovereign state with secure borders. American Christian Arabs are not all against Israel. Many Lebanese support Israel as the defender of the beleaguered Christian Arabs in Lebanon. Among the various Arab Christian groups in this country the more vehemently anti-Israel religious leaders, in their efforts to foster a growing pan-Arab consciousness in the Arab-American community - which is far from being monolithic - succeeded in forming a Standing Conference of American Middle East Christian and Moslem Leaders. The Conference claims now to represent two million Americans of Arabic heritage and to be composed of representatives of Eastern Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, Protestants and Moslems.

The largest Arab church in the U.S. is the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church, the Holy Synod of which is based in Syria. It has 110 churches broadly distributed throughout the U.S. but most numerous in California, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. It claims to have 350,000 persons attached to it, but church directories report its membership as being only 152,000. Its influence goes, however, beyond its numbers because it is a member of the National Council of Churches and has its representatives on the Governing Board there. It is vigorously demanding U.S. recognition of The PLO.

(MORE)

At one of its annual conventions it adopted resolutions against the Israel government for legalizing "Zionist-Israeli settlements in occupied Arab lands in violation of international law." It urged President Carter to exercise pressure on Israel to abolish these settlements. Another resolution demanded that the United States withhold economic and military aid from Israel. Its Patriarch, Elias IV, visited the United States for six weeks and was received by President Carter and UN Secretary Kurt Waldheim. He traveled from coast to coast and delivered anti-Israel speeches at conferences in New York, Boston, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Los Angeles and other cities.

DATE: 11.6.80 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST (ENGL AM IND) LETTER TO EDITOR
 HEADING: "MIDDLE EAST MURDER INC." BY: ARNOLD FORSTER, GEN'L COUNSEL
 EXCERPT: ...Here in the U.S. there is (ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE, BNAI BRIT, N.Y.) evidence of an ever-increasing demand that the PLO be brought into the Middle East negotiations as the only proper party with which to deal in regard to the West Bank. Frankly, I am amazed that this should be happening here in America in light of the unrelieved anti-U.S. thrust of the PLO. Among others, a prestigious religious organization, assorted politicians...all seem unaware that the very PLO they would place in charge of the West Bank is aiding and abetting our worst enemies in Iran, in the Soviet Union, and in most other powers hostile to us....Yet the National Council of Churches, a major American Protestant umbrella organization recently dispatched a mission to the Middle East to investigate the Palestinian problem. Returning from the trip, the mission unsurprisingly called for a U.S. dialogue with the PLO...(END EXCERPTS)

DATE: 7.6.80 JOURNAL: "YEDIOT AKHRONOT" (HEB PM IND)
 HEADING: "YOUTH RAISED AS CHRISTIAN CHANGED HIS NAME TO YONATHAN NETANYAHU"
 BYLINE: Reuven Leib PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER HERTZ AT GRAVE OF ENTEBBE HERO
 SUMMARY: Story of young student at Harvard University, son of Jewish mother and Catholic father, raised as a Catholic, but recently discovered from neighbours that he is Jewish, which had been concealed from him for the sake of "domestic peace." He recently arrived in Israel for a visit with a Jewish friend and while visiting the grave of Entebbe hero Yonatan Netanyahu decided to change his name to that of the Entebbe hero.

DATE: 8.6.80 JOURNAL: NEWSVIEW (ENGLISH WEEKLY) FEATURE ARTICLE
 HEADING: "THE PELECH EXPERIMENT"
 BYLINE: Dvora Waysman
 EXCERPT: Pelech Experimental Open Religious High School has something unique... a school with a relaxed informal atmosphere, and with a wider scope of subjects taught by more open methods than any other religious high school in the country... One furor was caused when the school decided that students should know something about Christianity, and a lesson was given analyzing Christ's Sermon on the Mount. Another controversy was over some parents' disapproval of the school's policy of allowing girls to study Gemara (an elaboration of the Mishna)...(END EXCERPTS)

DATE: 12.6.80 JOURNAL: "MAARIV" (HEB PM IND) NEWS ARTICLE
 HEADING: "INJUNCTION AGAINST CHRISTIAN RESIDENT OF ARAD AT REQUEST OF JEWISH WIFE"
 BYLINE: Dalia Mazori
 SUMMARY: An order was issued by High Court preventing the departure of a resident of Arad while divorce proceedings are carried on between him and his wife. The court ordered the matter to be reviewed by the Latin Patriarchate court and the Jewish rabbinical court for their opinions relative to the interfaith marriage. The court granted the wife's request because she feared that her husband was about to leave Israel and hinder the divorce proceedings. (END)

DATE: 14.6.80 JOURNAL: JERUSALEM POST INTERNATIONAL EDITION
 HEADING: "A BRIDGE BUILDER SAYS FAREWELL" PHOTO: Coos Schoneveld
 BYLINE: CHRISTIAN COMMENT/OIKOUMENIKOS
 SUMMARY: A tribute to Dr. J. Coos Schoneveld, his wife Ellen and their 8 children, now leaving Jerusalem after 13 years, to take up a post in Germany as Gen'l Secy of the International Council of Christians and Jews.

END TRANSCRIPTION/14.7.80/mb

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