

BAPTIST CHURCH FIRE

The burning down of the Baptist Chapel on 4 Markis Street in Jerusalem on 8th October 1982 elicited over 50 newspaper clippings from the Israeli press within a two-week period. Press coverage included news stories, interviews with Pastor Lindsey, feature articles about Baptists and the Jerusalem congregation, Christian-Jewish tension; editorial denunciations of zealotry, and a variety of follow-up stories about the incident. Following is a survey by date of press coverage between 8th & 22nd Oct.

8TH OCTOBER 1982:

"HAARIV" (P.M.) "BAPTIST CHURCH IN JERUSALEM COMPLETELY BURNT DOWN IN NIGHT-TIME ARSON." A photo of the ruined chapel accompanied the initial report. Suspicions pointed at zealots; and concern was expressed about antisemitic reactions to the fire. Pastor Lindsey was described as "stunned" and quoted as saying: "There is no estimating the spiritual and emotional damage caused to us; the heart weeps." The fire broke out shortly after midnight, and a large group of fire-fighters arrived on the scene, with efforts made to prevent the spread of the fire to the surrounding buildings, adjoining the chapel.

9TH OCTOBER 1982: SABBATH--NO NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHED.10TH OCTOBER 1982

JERUSALEM POST: "POLICE HUNT ARSONISTS IN BAPTIST CHURCH FIRE" A <sup>PHOTOGRAPH OF JEWS</sup> and Christians in a special Sabbath prayer meeting outside the gutted church. After describing the fire, the story dealt with police investigation of Jewish zealots, "but they did not rule out the possibility that a Moslem or a Christian arsonist had started the fire to spoil interfaith relations in Jerusalem."

"HA'ARETZ": "YOUTH SUSPECT ARRESTED IN ARSON OF BAPTIST CHURCH IN CAPITAL" A photo of the gutted church and another of Christian worshippers at the site following the fire. The police confirmed earlier suspicions of arson and announced the setting up of a special investigative team headed by Deputy-Commander Arye Schneidsher. Several directions were being explored. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Begin issued a strong denunciation of the act as did J'lm Mayor Teddy Kollek. "Every sign of violence against any religion will defame our name and hinder our sovereignty over a united Jerusalem, Israel's capital," the Mayor stated. The Municipality announced the establishment of a special fund and special bank account for contributions towards the rebuilding of the church.

"HAARETZ": "BAPTIST COMMUNITY LEADER: 'THERE IS NO ANGER IN MY HEART--ONLY SORROW' ONE THOUSAND PERSONS CAME TO WORSHIP IN THE COURTYARD OF THE BURNT-OUT CHURCH." The article by Lilly Galilee briefly described the worship service the Sabbath following the fire, at which there were many visitors from abroad attending the Christian Feast of Tabernacles celebration in Jerusalem, also visitors from other local Christian churches, and Jewish neighbours (including a number with Orthodox Jewish head-gear and one wrapped in a Jewish prayer shawl). Dr. Lindsey's background was outlined (born in Oklahoma, in Israel 43 years, lost a leg in 1961 in an effort to retrieve an Arab orphan in the "no man's land" between East and West Jerusalem before its re-unification). Dr. Lindsey denied that they are "missionaries." He said: "The church is open to everyone, but it is not missionary." There had been previous attacks upon the church and adjacent bookshop, but nothing recent--except for the church being listed with a group of sects in a placard in the ultra-orthodox neighbourhood of Meah Shearim. Jewish Orthodox friends had informed him of this, but he had no idea who might be responsible for the fire. Meanwhile, Interior & Police Minister Joseph Burg arrived at the site with senior police officials. There were complaints about their relatively late appearance and also about the silence of the Chief Rabbi. The Minister denounced the arson "in strong language."

"HAARETZ" EDITORIAL :

"MISCREANTS IN ROME AND IN JERUSALEM": Linking the atrocity committed against the Roman synagogue the previous week with the burning of the Baptist church, the editorialist noted that both crimes remain unsolved and should be denounced in the strongest terms. The writer deplored the winds of ultra nationalism and religious zealotry which have been blowing in Israeli public life which "produce a comfortable climate for violence of this kind." Just as the Italian authorities are obliged to protect Jewish synagogues in Italy, the Israeli government must protect the holy places of all religions within its territory, all the more so when the injured party is such "a congenial Christian community whose leader is one of Israel's staunchest friends."

Many Jerusalemites know and esteem Dr. Lindsey, and the little church on Markis Street was an inseparable part of the landscape for dozens of years."

**JERUSALEM POST EDITORIAL:** "ANTISEMITIC OUTRAGE ABR OAD...AND RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE HERE" In a similar vein to the "HAARETZ" editorialist, the "POST" lead article linked the attack on the Roman synagogue and the Jerusalem church fire (not as cause and effect, but as similar outrages). Welcoming the condemnation of the arson by top Israeli officials, the writer called attention to Mayor Kollek's comment that the fire "came in the wake of certain negligence and perhaps even a degree of tolerance by Gov't leaders towards religious fanatics." The writer is incensed at the fact that the two Chief Rabbis had "so far failed to express their condemnation."

**"DAVAR":** "THE POLICE HAD INFORMATION THAT EXTREMISTS WERE PLOTTING AGAINST THE BAPTIST CHURCH" Accompanied by a photo of the gutted church, the reporter claimed that the police were aware of the plot of extremists against the church in view of previous attacks on the church and bookshop by zealots. The police are investigating persons in the ultra-Orthodox community. Meanwhile, dozens of citizens have indicated their desire to help in the rebuilding of the church, and many attended the solidarity service held in the courtyard. Mayor Kollek stated that an attack on a church is no different from an attack on a synagogue. (ANOTHER PHOTO WAS CARRIED IN THE SAME EDITION, THIS ONE OF WORSHIPPERS IN THE COURTYARD OF THE GUTTED CHURCH.)

**"AL HANISHMAR":** "LET US PRAY TOGETHER IN THE MIDST OF THE ASHES" THE BAPTIST JERUSALEM LEADER APPEALED TO HIS FLOCK AND THE MULTITUDES WHO CAME TO EXPRESS SOLIDARITY WITH THE BURNT-OUT CONGREGATION. A description of the solidarity service, including Jews and Christians, "many worshippers coming from adjacent synagogues in their prayer shawls and skullcaps." A recapitulation of the fire, reactions of shock by Jews and Christians; an interview with Pastor Lindsey. "We are not missionaries," says Lindsey. "We have never offered money to anyone to convert. We believe in Jesus as Messiah and in all the biblical prophecies. We are 'half Jews.' Our spiritual blood is Jewish, and therefore we have this great affinity to Judaism." There follows a description of worship at the congregation, an historical survey of the congregation and the Baptist movement. Lindsey added: "On the night of the fire the Reform Rabbi in the nearby synagogue came by. He sat with us and wept, and he encouraged us very much." Jan van der Hoeven of the International Christian Embassy expressed concern over possible antisemitic reactions to the fire. He re-affirmed the support of "millions of people filled with love for Israel" who were represented by participants at the Christian Feast of Tabernacles celebrations. He also noted that the Christian Embassy has been threatened by religious zealots, especially from Rabbi Kahana's group. A large group of Israelis arrived at the church to express solidarity from the National Tour Guide Ass'n. They demanded that the Tourist Ministry issue a statement denouncing the fire.... A second large article in this edition focused on the police investigation of two Jewish extremist groups (KAHANA'S & KESHET). The possibility that it was a provocation by anti-Israeli elements is not being discounted.

**"HATSOFEH":** "THE WORK OF EXTREMIST GROUPS OR A PROVOCATION...THE INVESTIGATION IS PROCEEDING ALONG BOTH LINES IN THE JERUSALEM CHURCH BURNING AFFAIR" (A 1 1/2 column summary of the incident, the investigation, the denunciations by Israeli officials...)

**"HAMODIYA":** "VIGOROUS INVESTIGATION BY POLICE TO DISCOVER THOSE WHO SET JERUSALEM BAPTIST CHURCH AFIRE" (A somewhat shorter account, but basically as above.)

**"YEDIOT AKHROMOT":** "CHURCH HEAD WANTED TO IMMERSE...FOR BURG THE FIRE EXTINGUISHERS SUFFICE." (A brief report of Dr. Burg's visit to the site and a witty exchange between him and Lindsey.) **BURG:** "Oh, I've soiled myself." **DR. LINDSEY:** "I'm quite ready to immerse you." **BURG:** "If you're proposing the services of John the Baptist, I'll be satisfied with the waters of the fire extinguishers." In the same edition there was a longer news article describing mainly Jewish reaction to the fire, including reports that several synagogues had offered to raise money for the rebuilding of the church. A third article was a photo story of the solidarity service in the courtyard.

**"HAARIV":** "DOZENS OF NEIGHBORHOOD JEWS CAME TO THE BURNT OUT CHURCH TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR SOLIDARITY...A THOUSAND CHRISTIANS AT SPECIAL SERVICE EXPRESSED FRATERNITY AND SYMPATHY FOR JEWISH PEOPLE...TWO SUSPECTS ARRESTED." An updating of the incident, with more background information about Robt Lindsey, described very sympathetically; the arrest of two unidentified suspects; and information about contributions to the special fund now opened (Acc't No. 70950/79) at Bank Leumi.

11TH OCTOBER 1982

**HAARETZ:** "JEWISH YOUTH FROM COLUMBIA & SKULLCAPPED ISRAELI SUSPECTED OF CHURCH ARSON" A brief report of the arrest of two suspects, with the Columbian youth reportedly mentally unbalanced. Meanwhile, J'lm Chief Rabbi Solti denounced the church burning and

expressed the hope "that this grave act was not committed by any Jew of sound mind." The police have undertaken to increase their watch over holy places....An emotional feature article headed "OUR HANDS HAVE BEEN IN THIS TREACHERY" (an apparent allusion to Deut. 21:7) by Yehuda Litani, a neighbour and friend of Dr. Lindsey, and a childhood friend of his son David, appeared in the same edition.

DAVAR--HATSOFEH--AL HAMISHMAR--YEDIOT AKHRONOT--MAARIV: Brief reports on the arrest of two suspects (as above); also noted that two anti-mission campaigners (although not suspects) will be invited for questioning about the fire. YEDIOT AKHRONOT also reported that Tourist Minister Sharir visited the site and added his condemnation to the act, also instructing Israel representatives abroad to underscore Gov't denunciations of the act.

AL HAMISHMAR: In an editorial headed "BARBARIC ACT", the paper took a sharp swing against "sinister religious zealot sects ill at ease with religious liberty and tolerance" who have been responsible for "abominable acts against the sanctuaries of members of other religions." The editorial concluded with a quotation of "the tolerant reaction of the Baptist clergyman who, following prayer at the ruined church, said: 'Let us pray for those who set the fire; and we do not desire that this incident should provoke antisemitism.'"

MAARIV: A background article surveyed attacks on Christian installations by anti-mission zealots in recent years as well as providing some biographical material about the Lindseys, including the claim that "Dr. David (sic!) Lindsey is active among the Christian communities and known for his ties with the Jewish establishment. His daughter, born and educated here, converted to Judaism." (Evidently, this is an erroneous reference to Gordon Lindsay's daughter Carole-Shira. TRANSL.) The head of the Baptists denies any involvement in any missionary activity." On the same page an article headed: "WHO ARE THE BAPTISTS?" (written by former Relief Affairs Director Yisrael Lippel) summarized Baptist distinctives--separation of Church & State, congregational autonomy, believer's baptism, mission and evangelizing, their worldwide outreach. Lippel concluded: "It seems to me if there is any basis (for suspicion that the local Baptists engage in missionary activity, which they themselves deny) such activity is at present more directed at the Arab population and especially at believers of other Christian sects living in Jerusalem."

12TH OCTOBER 1982: HAARETZ, DAVAR, AL-HAMISHMAR, YEDIOT AKHRONOT, MAARIV--All published similar articles about arrested suspects and tentative evidences of their connection to the fire based on laboratory tests of clothing and hair found near the site of the fire which may be linked to one of the suspects. Meanwhile, psychiatric tests are also being performed on the Columbian suspect whose explanations were questionable and contradictory. The second suspect, an Israeli, age 33, appeared several times at meetings of "NETIVYA," a Messianic congregation which meets in the parlour of the Baptist House on Narkis Street. The suspect had tried to persuade the leader of the group, Joseph Shulam, to meet with Rabbi Golding, a Jew who converted to Christianity in his youth, became a clergyman, and then reconverted to Judaism. (SEE SELECTIONS #106, page 1) The suspect had in his possession literature written by Golding against the Mission. In other writings of Golding it is recommended that damage be done to the churches. The suspect and his attorney denied any connection to the fire and claimed that his conversations with the "messianics" were friendly and non-violent. "YEDIOT AKHRONOT" added that contributions continue to come in. A group of local Jews met with Pastor Lindsey and offered to help rebuild the church by contributing their own labour.

"YEDIOT AKHRONOT" had another feature article with a photograph of Dr. Lindsey under the heading: "THE BAPTISTS--'WE'RE USED TO TROUBLE'". Edna Shekel provided background information about Dr. Lindsey--age 65, pastor of J'lm congregation, in Israel since 1939, earned doctorate in theology in Louisville, Ky; also studied at Jerusalem's Hebrew University where he teaches in the Dept of Comparative Religion. He also assists Prof. David Flusser, has translated Mark and other New Testament work in Hebrew. The bookshop was vandalized eight years ago by two young American girls and five years ago a grenade was thrown on the porch but no one was hurt. They sometimes have threatening phone calls and sometimes Dr. Lindsey is shouted at on the street. "The problem is with lunatic zealots who think we are ruining the Jewish people," he says. They are mostly upset at Jews who come to worship with the Baptists. Because of them, extremist groups like Rabbi Kahana's people and the anti-mission organization Yad L'Akhem charge that the Baptists are missionaries. Dr. Lindsey rejects the charge and points to the good relations enjoyed with their Jewish neighbours....He estimates some 600 Baptists--(including Arabs) in Israel, with 350 worshipping in the J'lm congregation (of whom 100 are members of the congregation). Most are U.S. or Europe-born, among whom are some 30 Jews (mostly American), and a minority are Israeli-born.

(MORE)

"KOL Y ERUSHALAYIM" (J'LM SUPPLEMENT OF "YEDIOT AKHRONOT") Five photographs of the site were featured under the heading "FIRE ON MARKIS STREET". Coverage included a recapitulation of the fire, a summary of five attacks on Jerusalem Christian properties since 1973, an initial refusal by Rabbi Kahana to comment. A feature article headed "ARSON: AN INFORMATION CALAMITY" by Zvi Singer analyzed the possible impact on Jewish communities abroad, and reported on efforts to organize an information campaign with the cooperation of Christians to explain that Israeli authorities had no part in the act and are working to trap the culprits. Daniel Rossing of the Religious Affairs Department also expressed his concern over possible negative reactions abroad. Local Christians with whom he has been in contact are convinced the fire was the work of isolated individuals. Rossing was personally involved about two years ago in trapping a "lunatic, a lone wolf," who tried to set the Christian bookshop "THE TORCH" afire. He underscored the information damage to Israel's image by such acts in a country "on which the eyes of the Christian world are focused because of its sacredness to millions of believers." Yisrael Lippel commented that "every Christian institution in Israel is a branch of a great world centre numbering millions of believers, and the weight of these institutions is far beyond what they appear to be locally. Attacks on Christian institutions in Israel kindle flames of passion in the hearts of many people around the world." Mayor Kollek accused Gov't leaders of "neglecting the guarding of holy places. Every sign of violence against any religion will in the final analysis hurt us in our rule over a united Jerusalem."

"KAHL HA'IR" (JERUSALEM SUPPLEMENT OF HAARETZ) Two full pages (including four photographs) focused on the police investigation of the suspects were part of the front-page story, which at the time hinged on the identification of a hair cluster found near the fire. The article also touched on the anti-missionary activities of Rav Golding and the "NETIVYA" Messianic congregation headed by Shulam. The second article, headed "THEY ARE BURNING FRIENDS ALSO", featured an interview with Dr. Lindsey by Madav Shragai, and made reference to Religious Affairs Dep't files on the Baptists as "missionaries." "YAD L'AKHIM" still considers the Baptists as missionaries but denounced the arson. "These are not our methods," a spokesman stated. They believe that the demonstrative friendship of the Baptists for Israel is only a cover-up for their missionary activities designed to attract Jews to Christianity. Daniel Rossing of the Religious Affairs Dep't, however, denies this charge. He divides the churches into three categories: Those who have decided against missions to the Jews, those who refuse to abandon missions to anyone, and those who agree on mission but who compromise by saying that in view of the historic circumstances there should be no missionary activity among Jews today. Rossing puts the Baptists in the third category of those who in principle believe in mission work among Jews but do not initiate missionary activities in the "vulgar" sense of the term by launching literature campaigns among Jews, for example. Although he does not agree to such activity, Rossing considers it "unharmful." Dr. Lindsey himself denies that he is a missionary and is generally acceptable to the Israeli establishment. He has served four times as a judge in the World Bible Quiz; notwithstanding protests to the Prime Minister's Office by "YAD L'AKHIM". Notwithstanding reports to the contrary, neither Lindsey nor his congregation take a political stand (unlike the International Christian Embassy) on Israel's boundaries, "Greater Land of Israel," etc.

A sidebar on the same page quotes excerpts from a "secret document" taken from the files of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the late 1960s, as follows: "The Baptists in Israel, whose congregation numbers some 120 members, are the most aggressive among the Protestants in Israel, although they are most dangerous on the political level...I (unnamed) have the impression that they are less interested in hunting Jewish souls by means of individual conversions but are fighting on a wider front; that is, a general assault on the religious-political regime in Israel. By means of writing (in their Hebrew and English organ 'AYAHAD') they conduct a continual offensive against the 'millet system,' the problem of 'Who is a Jew?' in opposition to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Rabbinate, the Interior Ministry, etc., and aspire to separate all matters of religion from matters of State...These poisonous articles have a great influence on public opinion in the U.S.A. and elsewhere. Last year the Baptists took under their protection a number of apostates who had been 'persecuted' or allegedly 'discriminated against'."

13TH OCTOBER 1982

HAARETZ: Members of the J'lm Municipal Council will contribute to the restoration of the Baptist Church in J'lm in response to the proposal of Yehiel Guttman. Several ultra-ORTHODOX MEMBERS OF Agudat Yisrael raised objections, explaining that according to Jewish religious law, an ultra-orthodox Jew may not contribute to a church. "YEDIOT AKHRONOT" claims only one member of Agudat Yisrael raised objections. "DAVAR": In a feature article by Moshe Kol, the former Tourist Minister expressed his opinions on various current events, and linked the antizionist and anti-Israel campaign in Italy

which preceded the bombing attack on the Rome Synagogue to the same spirit of intolerance and fanaticism which led to the burning of the Baptist Church in J'lm. "We must call our people to the way of tolerance and to fight against the cultivation of narrow-minded nationalism." The writer questioned the wisdom of a radio interviewer asking Dr. Lindsey, "standing on the ruins of his burnt-down church, whether he engaged in missionary activity...such idiocy!"

#### 15TH OCTOBER 1982

HAARETZ, DAVAR, KAHN HA'IR: THE TWO SUSPECTS IN THE ARSON ATTACK ON THE BAPTIST CHURCH RELEASED FROM PRISON AS A RESULT OF INSUFFICIENT EVIDENCE IN POLICE HANDS. (Police to continue their investigation.)

LETTER TO EDITOR: (Daniel Rossing to KAHN HA'IR) Responding to the article by Madav Shragai of 12.10. 82, Rossing asks leave to note that whatever was written in the "secret document from the 1960s...certainly provides no guidelines for us in 1982 in our relations with the Baptist Church in Israel...The Ministry of Religious Affairs is not trying to stir up inter-religious passions but the contrary; to do everything possible to bring about understanding and fraternity among all faiths in Israel, generally, and particularly in the Holy City Jerusalem; and we strongly denounce the attempt of any element impeding these objectives."

YEDIOT AKHROT: A sardonic attack on "the man in the street" who accepts all kinds of violent behaviour with a shrug...whether it be the lunacy of religious fanatics setting a mosque afire or burning down the Baptist Church in Jerusalem.

MAARIV: "The minefield of Dr. Robert Lindsey"--A full-page interview by Yaacov Haelyon of Dr. Lindsey with much biographical material. A few quotations of Dr. Lindsey follow: "There must be freedom to receive Jews (in the Church). The Christian Church must be open to everyone who wishes to join it...but there must be awareness of Jewish sensitivity in Israel. I say that we don't engage in missionary activity because in Israel the term has a negative sense. It's always linked to suspicions of bribery and enticement. But, yes, we are missionaries in the sense that we are open to every man..." Yisrael Lippel: "I'm convinced that in the past the Baptists also worked on the assumption that they must win souls to their community until they learned that Israeli society doesn't suffer missionaries. What do they do? They translate, for example, Christian books into Hebrew aimed only at Jews. Is this missionizing? Of course, is the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures and Talmud into English and their distribution in stores a form of Jewish missionizing?" Lindsey and his fellow-Baptists are not embittered against Israel, and are well aware that only a handful of zealots are involved in the activities against them. "I was moved more than anything else by a young lad, says Lindsey, "about 10 years old, who came here on his bicycle and in words of comfort said to me: 'You'll see, you'll have an even bigger and more beautiful church here than before...'"

MAARIV: An interview with Norm Littel, Director of Baptist Village in Petah Tikva, against the background of the J'lm Baptist fire; gave a history of Baptist Village, its past ministries and its present ministry as a conference centre.

#### 17TH OCTOBER 1982

"OMER" (The vowelized, simple Hebrew journal): A brief review of the incident.

#### 18TH OCTOBER 1982

HAARETZ: LETTER TO EDITOR (Elisheva Rimon, Chair-person of the Society of Kindergartens and Day Nurseries Ohel Yaacov, Ramat Gan). An expression of solidarity with Pastor Lindsey and recollecting friendship and helpfulness of Lindsey during last tense days of British Mandate in 1947 when he turned over a bungalow to a Jewish kindergarten for a half-year free-of-charge....JERUSALEM POST "CHRISTIAN COMMENT/OIKOUMENIKOS", under the heading "JEWS AND NON-JEWS RALLY IN SUPPORT OF BAPTIST CHURCH" featured an article by a Christian writer describing the warm and varied responses of the Jewish community to the burning of the Baptist Church.

#### 21ST OCTOBER 1982

HAARETZ: In an article dealing with the Haifa Rabbinat's opposition to the controversial play "NEFESH YEHUDD", Haifa Chief Rabbi Cohen was quoted as denouncing the attack on the Baptist Church as "a criminal act...and I'm sorry that you have been recompensed evil for good," the rabbi reportedly wrote to Dr. Lindsey. He referred to an arrangement worked out between him and the Baptists whereby the latter agreed to forego the construction of a centre on land adjacent to an ultra-orthodox community.

#### 22ND OCTOBER 1982

In a news article about a Youth Information team headed for the U.S.A., an Israeli group of teenagers was briefed in a special lecture about the Baptist Church

in Jerusalem in the wake of the arson attack. "YEDIOT AKHROMOT" carried a three-page feature article in the weekend supplement under the heading "FIRE IN THE CHURCH," based on interviews with Lindsey, Kahana and Lippel, and accompanied by six photographs. Also included was a description of a Sabbath service in a tent outside the ruined church and a wedding performed by Lindsey for a couple from Ir Ovot who were accompanied by several religious Jews. Some excerpts: "Rabbi Kahana has no doubts that Christianity, and certainly the Baptist sect, is missionary. Look at Billy Graham, says Kahana, he's a well-known missionary and Baptist. Lindsey is a missionary. That is the destiny of Christianity, its mission. Sure, the Baptists are great friends of Israel, but that is only because of the hope that at the climax of the common path, with the coming of Messiah, we will accept the yoke of Christianity and Jesus as Messiah and God. If Lindsey says he's no missionary, then he's a liar... The most convincing proof that every Christian is a missionary is put into a compact little book of Kahana's. Once Willem van der Hoeven, director of the Israeli Christian Embassy in Israel said to him "Rabbi Kahana, if you would take upon yourself the true religion, you would be one of the great men in the world." It testifies, says Kahana, that he is a missionary and that was an attempt to convert me. Therefore, I tell you that I'm not against the burning of the Baptist church; on the contrary, I'm joyful over it. I rejoiced to hear they had burnt them out. I only lamented to hear of the shame of what came afterwards, that Burg went to visit them. Oh, what a shame!" What pains Rabbi Kahana is that in our Land of Israel the Knesset has not enacted a law against the presence of Christians in Israel, at least the missionaries among them. In Kahana's eyes the greatest horror is that we have lost the sense of dread of the Mission. The sabra has lost the sense of being Jewish, he says. The sabra has become an Israeli, not a Jew. And speaking of horrors, I relate to him that a small number of Jews take part in the Baptist Sabbath prayers. A horror, says our rabbi...abomination...and you shall purge out the evil from your midst... There is no way to prevent Jews from praying there, only by enacting legislation. But the National Religious Party doesn't care any longer. They don't understand that there is no difference between losing Jews in the gas chambers of Auschwitz and in the Mission. So they have burnt them out, and now Lindsey is a national hero. We haven't gained anything. A law must be enacted against the Mission. Begin isn't the most democratic person, so why doesn't he see to the passage of such a law?" (In a sidebar accompanying the feature, Yisrael Lippel provided background information about the Baptist movement, its history, practices and presence in Israel.)

#### CHRISTIANS PRO-ISRAEL

"FEAST OF TABERNACLES": An assortment of 20 clippings from the local press dealt with the International Christian Celebration During the Feast of Tabernacles (sponsored by the International Christian Embassy) in its various aspects: Participation in the annual Jerusalem March, an address by P.M. Menahem Begin at the opening session ("Jews and Christians can cooperate for a better future and for a better life for our children and grandchildren," he declared to an enthusiastic crowd of 4,000). Photographs of the event were carried by the major daily newspapers. The "biblical dinner", which concluded the week-long event, was not dampened, "contrary to expectations," by the arson attack against the Baptist Church. ("YEDIOT AKHROMOT, 11.10.82) A delegation from the "Feast" met with Israeli Pres. Navon at his official residence. He denounced the burning of the Baptist Church and also warned against the kind of criticism of Israel which goes beyond a legitimate exercise and becomes a denial of Israel's right to exist. (HAARIV, DAVAR 12.10)

In an analytical article, Yisrael Lippel interpreted the motives behind the "Feast" based on Zechariah 14:16, and wrote: "Clearly, Zechariah's prophecy is connected with the end times, and it can be understood that those Christians who trouble themselves to come from distant lands to Jerusalem on the Feast of Tabernacles have both their feet in the eschatological process, and the Messiah (who for them is of course Jesus the Nazarene) is already standing behind the wall waiting for his re-entry into Jerusalem... Those Christians, relatively few, by no means represent the great majority of the worldwide Christian church which numbers more than a billion believers, nor are they supported by one serious church in Israel. (There is also a suspicion of missionary intent behind their activities, although they deny this.) Without making any final determination, at the very least it should be made clear that the motives of the participants are purely Christian, theological or mystical." (HAARIV: 1.10.82) A closing article headed "SUCH LOVE" was subheaded: "ONE COULD ALMOST DRINK IN THE SEA OF WARMTH AND LOVE RADIATING FROM THOUSANDS OF PRO-ISRAELI CHRISTIANS WHO SPENT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES HERE." It included a selection of quotations from leaders and festival participants attending the biblical dinner, the closing event of the celebrations. (HAARIV: 14. 10. 82)