

HEBREW CHRISTIANS & OTHERS

A full two-page feature interview, the first in a series, with Archbishop Aharon Jean-Marie Lustiger of Paris, has begun in "YEDIOT AKHRONOT," the afternoon Hebrew daily (8.1.82) under the heading: "CONVERSATIONS WITH JEAN-MARIE LUSTIGER, ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS," by Yeshayahu Ben-Porat. The preface by the correspondent indicates a very friendly approach: "Intelligence, Simplicity and Congeniality are the three characteristics which stand out in a face-to-face meeting with the Archbishop," the writer notes. The interview deals with the archbishop's attitude towards the State of Israel (a Utopian dream become historical reality), his frequent visits to Israel and his encounters with Israelis, his belief in the prophetic significance of Israel (citing Ezekiel about the ingathering of the exiles), his attitude towards Judaism and the Jewish people ("I am not a religious Jew in the terms of Orthodox Judaism...in becoming a Christian, I was thinking of a better way of being a Jew."); The Archbishop affirmed his belief in the chosenness of Israel as a valid theological concept as distinct from a secular concept of chosenness which would lead to racial superiority feelings. He also discussed the details of his upbringing in a thoroughly secular Jewish immigrant home with considerable anticlerical sentiments. ("I remember hearing my parents saying something like: 'All the rabbis and all the priests are preaching the same nonsense.'") He also described his reading of Scripture, found in a family bookcase and the impact it had on his life, notwithstanding the secular education he received, which included some violent bouts with antisemites in France and also during visits to Germany to study. Meanwhile, he came to a conclusion as a young man of "the absolute certainty of the existence of God, who is absolute justice opposite the injustice and wrongdoing of man." It was during these pre-war years (the late 1930s) that he began to draw near to Christianity, and during that time came to know close at hand an anti-Nazi German family who were Christians. (The series is to continue on the 15th January 1982.)

On the same day the left-wing "AL HAMISHMAR" also carried an interview with the archbishop by Yehoshua Rosh concentrating more on his work as archbishop and on the Polish situation, but expressing some weariness with reporters (especially American Jews) asking the same "eternal questions" which he has answered time and again: Are the Jews still the "chosen people"? Could the Messiah have come with the world in its present state? Who are the greatest persons in the Bible? Meanwhile, he is labouring to help revive the Church in Paris and find a golden mean between nostalgic conservatives and impatient radicals. He also seeks "the mutual recognition of each other of Judaism and Christianity." The correspondent concludes his interview with the observation that the archbishop's "stand is not a comfortable one, and it seems to me that he is worthy of the encouragement of all progressives."

An article in the Jerusalem weekly "KAWL HA'IR" (8.1.82) reported on a tragic family situation involving a Hebrew Christian. For 19 years he had refused to grant his wife, a convert to Judaism, a divorce on the grounds that his faith forbade it. His wife had previously been married to a Hebrew Christian, whom she divorced, and married "a member of the Messianic sect whose centre is in Jerusalem." The second husband was hospitalized for a long period of time, and notwithstanding intervention by the Rabbinate, which was willing to issue a certificate of divorce upon the husband's consent, he remained adamant in his refusal. At the beginning of the week a group of rabbis again met with the husband ^{in the hospital} for a session lasting several hours, "in the course of which the rabbinical judges and the Messianic husband engaged in a theological dialogue about the elements of his faith. After several hours, he finally consented to grant the sought-after divorce to his wife, although insisting that he himself would not perform the deed, but a messenger."

"MAARIV" (8.1.81) reported a public meeting held at the ZOA House in Tel-Aviv, organized by a group headed by Dr. Joseph Alcahai and the publicist Klaus Moses Pulz by means of a notice in the press. The hall was packed with younger and older people, when Dr. Alcahai (a doctor of Italian law) began reading from a sheaf of papers, continuing for over an hour, referring to the rise of the State of Israel, "the union of Marx and the Torah which led to the status quo (in religious affairs), but Israel must at once rise up to the mountain of the Lord. After about an hour, he remarked that there was once a wonderful Jew from Nazareth who really taught the Law of truth to our people, but we in our iniquities estranged ourselves from him, saying that he offered nothing new and wasn't even Jewish. By now the crowd bestirred itself. 'You are missionaries!' they began to shout. 'You're Jews for Jesus!' Half the crowd then left the hall in protest, and the echoes of a noisy debate could be heard coming from outside. (MOHE)

At this stage, when Preacher No. 1 concluded, it was clear that this had to do with registered agents of Jesus. The microphone was turned over to Preacher No. 2 and the translator went to work, explaining that Klaus Pulz had composed the best-seller, "ISRAEL AS A FOCAL POINT" (Yisrael K'Moked), that he knows Hebrew but he is accustomed to speaking German. Pulz said that the people of Israel can expect the days of Messiah, and for this he cited from the New Testament. 'You're deceivers!' the audience shouted. 'You're missionaries!' Pulz said that Abraham had also been a missionary in the Land of Canaan, and continued to quote the New Testament. The threesome of speakers promised that they would speak until 11:00 at night and then there would be a question time.

About a hundred remained. Near the exit I saw forms to be filled out by those interested in joining the group. I identified several signatures from Hadera, Kfar Yona, Herzliya, Tel-Aviv. Looking for a message; what can you do!"

Noga Zevuluni of the Histadrut's daily "DAVAR" (14.12.81) writes about "someone who loves me, cares for me and prays for me daily, but I never knew him nor anything about him until one bright day I received a letter from him. The man is Morris (Moshe) Cerullo, and who is this one who loves me 'more than words can tell'? It appears that Cerullo is simply a missionary who represents in Jerusalem the World Evangelical Centre, whose headquarters is in San Diego, California. Very suavely (after citing Scripture from the Old Testament mingled with New Testament citations) he invites me 'to accept the Messiah' if I haven't already done so, right this moment, while I have his lesson in my hand. In his letter to me, which no doubt many others received, their addresses taken from the telephone directory, he calls me 'Dear Friend', and asks me to lay out before him my needs and problems, and he will pray for me because he believes in and expects miracles. His letter to me and to others is signed: God's Servant & Your Friend,

Morris Cerullo."

"I was astonished to read in "MAARIV HANEGEV" on 4.12.81 concerning 'Ir Ovot' as a 'religious settlement' of 'Jewish penitents' which is 'supplying religious services to the entire Arava region," "MAARIV" reader Y.S. Ginsberg of Omer writes in a letter to the editor (17.12.81). "I made a careful investigation and what did I learn?" he continues. "A Defence Dept. document reads: 'Founded in 1966 by a group of Jews who believe in Jesus.'" But in the newspaper report there isn't a hint of this information. Is the reporter and the distinguished newspaper "MAARIV" intending to serve the aims of the Christian Mission?"

BAILEY SMITH IN ISRAEL

"We are divided on the question of Jesus, and this is a very fundamental issue for a Christian, actually the chief distinction between us and other religions," Dr. Bailey Smith, President of the Southern Baptist Convention, told the Israeli press during a joint visit of Jews and Baptists. Dr. Smith achieved notoriety by his oft-quoted statement that "God Almighty does not hear the prayers of a Jew." While his theological convictions remain unchanged, Smith acknowledges that his remarks were very ill-chosen, adding that "there are times that God does not hear the prayers of practising Christians...or the prayers of Bailey Smith when my heart isn't right." He explained that what he meant to say was "that our approach to God must be through Jesus Christ, the only way to the Father; that's my life and what I preach." Nevertheless, Smith is convinced that Jews and Christians have "a thousand things in common. "You (Jews) gave us the Bible, you gave us our Saviour, and we cherish this Land of Israel with its wonderful history, and Judaism is a great part of the Christian heritage," he explained.

Dr. Smith was part of a delegation of ¹⁴ Southern Baptist leaders and six members of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, led by Theodore Friedman, its National Program Director. "We have an equal responsibility of getting the Jewish community to accept religious diversity without seeing it as a threat," Friedman remarked, noting that both communities need to be freed from stereotyped views of one another, and to understand the diversity existing within Jewish and Christian communities.

The delegation was received by top Israeli officials, including the President, and they were told that only the Prime Minister's illness at the time of their visit prevented a call on Mr. Begin. Dr. Smith stressed the need for greater cooperation between Jews and Christians, the importance of strong support for Israel, and continued progress in inter-communal communication. "I intend to go back and encourage everyone to have great love and support for this blessed land, to support the Jewish State with secure borders and a united Jerusalem," he stated. In the course of the week-long ~~xxxix~~ ^{tour} of Israel, Smith revealed that his organization is examining the possibility of building a world Southern Baptist Centre in Jerusalem, and a site on the Mount of Olives was examined. "We can make a strong statement to the world and the people of Israel by establishing a centre in Jerusalem," Smith said, noting that the Southern Baptist Convention has 35,000 churches in 92 countries round the world, as well as in Arab lands. Smith also explained (MORE)

Baptist distinctives, the autonomous nature of Southern Baptist churches, their shared beliefs and practices (especially as they related to belief in the Bible and the ^{baptismal} immersion of believers), and their political, social and other diversities among themselves. Completing his second and final term as President of the S.B.C. (the maximum period of service permitted), he noted that before leaving office this year he would be involved in a Jewish-Christian seminar in Fort Worth, Texas. "I know 10,000% more about the Jewish community than I did two years ago," Smith told reporters in Israel. He seemed to be echoing what Theodore Friedman of the Anti-defamation League had remarked several months ago when he stated that "this year of dialogue and clarification of issues has led to the appearance of a new Bailey Smith." (SYNTHESIZED FROM REPORTS IN "HAARETZ", "MAARIV" on 11.12.81; "LETZIE NAYIS" (Yiddish) 17.12.81; JERUSALEM POST 13.12.81, INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, PARIS, 9.12.81.)

CHRISTMAS SEASON IN THE HOLY LAND:

The "JERUSALEM POST" led this year with a series of reports and features about the Christmas holidays, including several items about Christmas trees. The "Gardener's Corner" by Walter Frankl (14.12.81) suggested ways of growing one's own Christmas trees, traced the history of the custom of Christmas trees to pre-Christian days and its adaptation to Christianity by St. Boniface (680-755), German Lutherans and the Anglo-Saxon world. Rabbi Louis Rabinowitz, in his feature "TORA & FLORA" (25.12.81) noted the significance of the fig tree for Christians, citing Matthew 21:19; Mark 11:13 about the barrenness of the fig tree, and contrasts it with the storied fertility of the fig tree in rabbinic and Old Testament literature. "The experience of celebrating Christmas as a minority" is the theme of a full-page feature centered about two families of Christians living in Israel: The Todd's, associated with St. George's Cathedral and College Compound in East Jerusalem, and the Nicholls, associated with Tantur, the former Protestants, the latter Catholics. The festivities at Bethlehem...choirs, crowds, midnight mass, and the somewhat tense political situation nearby are also covered; but under the heading "PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS", the editorial writer commends "the personal courage and political wisdom of Bethlehem Mayor Elias Freij" for withstanding pressures to boycott the Christmas celebrations. "On Christmas Bethlehem becomes the spiritual capital of the Christian world, and there is no reason to play with Christmas prestige because of certain political events, as Mr. Freij aptly put it," the editorialist notes. One later sour note is a letter from an American pilgrim (8.1.82) who expressed "horror and consternation (that) the square/was crowded with inebriated teen-agers who had been sold beer from the stores on that same square (with) broken glass, beer bottles and beer cans all around..."

On Christmas Eve "HAARETZ" reporter Yoram Mizrahi filed a short feature article about Christmas at "the Good Fence" along the Lebanese border. It seemed to him a combination of "routine" tension, theatre (Christmas caroling and Hanuka candle-lighting), commercialism and nostalgia, especially among the UN personnel longing for a homeland Christmas. On Christmas Day the left-wing "AL HAMISHMAR" devoted a feature article to "THIS WEEK 1982 YEARS AGO: A SON IS BORN TO A VIRGIN." The writer discusses the dating of Christmas and connects it to the date set for the Feast of the Circumcision with which the New Year begins and/or the pre-Christian celebrations of the winter solstice. He discusses the nativity accounts in Matthew and Luke and concludes that they are "full of contradictions, (while) the serious and philosophical Gospels of Mark and John do not even relate to (the Nativity) at all." The slaughter of the innocents is also analyzed in the light of Josephus (who makes no mention of it) who "it may be assumed would not have yielded to Herod (in not mentioning it)" if it had occurred. He concludes that "in the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament there are no lack of contradictions which only a profound and blind faith is able to come to terms with. For some reason, our Office of Education opposes the inclusion of the New Testament in the high school study plans."

Several news and feature articles in the Hebrew press dwelt on the "dilemma" of the holiday celebrations for Jews generally and Israelis in particular. While "HAARETZ" devoted a two-page feature article on Christmas Day to "Santa Claus Arriving at the American-Jewish home" and the various ways of coping with it (open resistance, Judaizing it by adapting or combining Hanuka celebrations, or completely secularizing it and accepting it), the widespread observance of New Year's Eve (termed "SYLVESTER" after St. Sylvester, a 4th Century pope, whose feast day is 31st Dec.) among Israelis seems to be irreversible. A hospital in Hadera was said to be unable to conduct operations because of the absence of medical staff who took holiday leave, while thousands paid handsome sums of money to participate in lavish parties. A more cultural observance was noted in Tel-Aviv where a discussion of the trial of Jesus was conducted, with Dr. Robt. Lindsey Baptist leader, and Haym Cohen, former High Court Justice and writer on the subject leading a symposium.

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The now-annual event, "Liturgica", a series of concerts of sacred music, Jewish and Christian, again stirred up protests in the Orthodox ^{Jewish} community. The complaints focussed on the playing of Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis" with what was termed "a clearly Christian text" by the orchestra of the Israel Broadcasting Authority. The text includes Christian prayers in Jesus's name. The playing of Christian religious music by believing Jews is forbidden, according to the Chief Rabbinate. Furthermore, a publicly supported orchestra in a Jewish State should not be promoting the music of another religion, the Orthodox argued. The situation was aggravated by having the "Liturgica" festival held around the Christian Holy Days, with promotional material issued by the organizers featuring the picture of a cross. Haym Druckman (NRP) submitted an urgent proposal to the Knesset that it discuss the participation of large numbers of Jews in Christian celebrations. This was Hellenization, he charged, the pursuit of alien culture. Kalman Cahana (Poalei Agudat Yisrael) appealed to the General Director of the Israel Broadcasting Authority, Professor Yaron, to cancel the "Missa Solemnis" or to substitute the original text with something non-Christian. Yaron replied that he cannot propose any change in the text or the canceling of the performance, but any performers who for reasons of conscience would not take part would be excused. "It is difficult to see any offence in the performance of music which people listen to of their own free will and knowing the content of it," Prof. Yaron commented. K. Cahana admitted to a local reporter that his efforts ^{to thwart the concert} had been unsuccessful. (COMPILED FROM: "HAARETZ," "AL HAMISHMAR," "KAWL HA'IR," "HATSOEH," "SHEARIM," "MAARIV."

"CHRISTIANS FOR ISRAEL"

The International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem expressed its solidarity with Israel by the lighting of candles for Hanuka and Christmas. "We want to be close to you and to show you, in the name of millions of Christians in the world, that we are bound to one another," Jan Willem van der Hoeven, Director of the Embassy stated in a celebration sponsored by the Embassy, attended by some 150 Jews and Christians. ("MAARIV" 24.12.81) A two-page feature article in "NEWSVIEW" (JERUSALEM) under the heading "ISRAEL SHOULD GIVE UP LESS & DEMAND MORE," (24.11.81) dwelt on various aspects of the Embassy's work, based on interviews with van der Hoeven, the Watsons (professional musicians), Karel van Oordt, Christian businessman and founder of IP-80 to promote the sale of Israeli products, and citations from a brochure published by the Embassy, including remarks by Menahem Benhayim, secretary of the International Hebrew Christian Alliance in Israel... David Bivin, a member of the embassy's board of trustees and director of a language school in Jerusalem. An article about the Embassy also appeared in the Yiddish-Language "Letzte Nayis" (25.12.81) under the heading: "MILLIONS OF CHRISTIANS SUPPORT YOU". The JERUSALEM POST (16.12.81) reported that Johann Lackoff, Embassy director, left for Europe to set up additional consulates there beside the 16 now in existence.

The efforts of the Christian settlement in Galille, "NES ANIM", to be integrated into its Jewish surroundings have been less than successful, according to "HAARETZ" correspondent V. Struminsky, in a long feature article headed: "IT'S HARD TO BE A CHRISTIAN: THE CHRISTIAN VILLAGE NES ANIM STRUGGLES FOR SURVIVAL" (1.1.82). The writer describes the background to the founding of the settlement some 20 years ago, the opposition of the religious parties in Israel who suspected a missionary plot to convert Israeli Jews ("The suspicion was justified in view of Jewish historical experience," the widow of one of the founders, Stein Pilon, comments), and the coolness of Christian circles to their anti-missionary approach to Christian witness. When the plans were finally approved by the Israeli government, certain conditions were stipulated: No Jewish members were to be accepted by the community "in order to assure that the renunciation of missionary activities by the settlers would be carried out in practice;" and to further assure this, they agreed not to request Israeli citizenship later on, "because if you take Israeli citizenship, we won't be able to forbid you to accept Jewish settlers," they were told.

At present there are 180 settlers in Nes Anim, comprising 28 families and singles, and an additional 40 volunteers. Some 80% of the settlers are from Holland, the rest from Germany, the U.S.A. and Switzerland. Their main produce is flower-growing and they are among the pioneer rose-growers in the country and the largest exporters. They are also developing avocados and cotton and a youth hostel. While still requiring support from parent organizations abroad, their economy does provide their immediate support but is insufficient for expansion and investment. Their main social complaint is of isolation because of the ban on Jewish membership imposed upon them by the Israeli government. This tends to minimize their contact with Israeli society, limit their Hebrew language development and creates a feeling of (MORE)

foreignness, which, they claim, leads to a large turnover in population. Nevertheless, they feel that their exclusively Christian character gives them standing in the world Christian community with respect to their informational activities on behalf of Israel and Judaism and in persuading the churches to abandon missionary activities among the Jews. The voice of Nes Amim played a significant part in the decision of the Evangelical Church in the Rheinland last year when it canceled mission activities among the Jews, an opinion was expressed by a German theologian.

"Our synagogue suffers from a lack of worshippers as well as a lack of financial means to maintain it," Moshe Kirschenbaum of Haifa wrote in a local journal ("KOL-BOKER 29.11.81), and I wish to extol the sympathetic attitude of a Christian friend of the synagogue, Mr. Wilbur Presson of Haifa, who from time to time contributes significantly to the needs of the synagogue, which he visits periodically. It appears that Mr. Presson brings to the attention of American Jews and his Christian friends the existence of our synagogue, and recently he succeeded in conveying to us a modest monetary gift which was most encouraging as a gesture of good will and understanding for our synagogue which is so very precious to us. Perhaps the friendly attitude of Mr. Presson will serve our Jewish brethren as a good to help in the maintenance of our "little Temple" which perpetuates the memory of the casualties of Israel's wars."

"JOURNAL D'ISRAEL" (Tel-Aviv), under the heading: "CHRISTIANS AT ISRAEL'S SIDE: THE LAYMEN'S MOVEMENT AND ITS ACTION," published (4.12.81) a brief background piece on modern "Christian Zionism" and its biblical foundation, with copious Scripture references. A letter from a Norwegian Christian in the JERUSALEM POST (14.12.81) expressed strong concern over "the growing anti-Israel spirit in our Western society," and concludes that "we are many Christians who believe the Bible...It is from above and through you that the heavenly blessings once will flow over the earth."

NEW BAPTISM SITE ON THE JORDAN: Helga Udman of the JERUSALEM POST (20.12.81) produced a lengthy feature article headed "GATHERING OF THE FAITHFUL" about "Yardenit," the new pilgrims' baptismal site on the Jordan. (SEE SELECTIONS 97, page 2: CHRISTIANS IN ISRAEL).

HAIFA CHRISTIANS WELCOME PRESIDENT: To the beating of drums and the cheers of the crowd, Israeli President Yitzhak Navon was received by the Christian Community in Haifa in late October, "KOL HAIFA ("YEDIOT AKHRONOT" SUPPLEMENT) reported. Some 300 invited guests gathered at the Greek Catholic Patriarchate on Rehov HaGefen, for the first visit of an Israeli President at the patriarchate, while dozens of Christian youths from the Scouts movement stood by. Archbishop Maximos Salloum greeted the President while the major components of the Christian community in the north were in attendance--Christian Council Heads, Christian dignitaries, intellectuals. The President was visibly moved by the warmth of the welcome, and replied at length in his literary Arabic intermingled with quotations and verses from the New Testament, to which the audience paid close attention. Correspondent Toufik Khouri noted that whenever a citation was made from the New Testament, the President was applauded. The President also took the occasion to praise the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and also commended the very positive relations existing between Jews and Arabs in Haifa. In his remarks the archbishop also noted that the Christians in Israel enjoy absolute freedom of worship and he called on Israel to make this fact known the world over.

ANTI-CULT GROUP & AJC: An anti-cult group based in Miami, Fla, "Concerned Parents of Cult Children", has criticized the American Jewish Congress for filing a friend-of-the-court brief in favour of the "Moonies" ("Unification Church") in a real estate tax case in New York State. Rabbi Ruben Dobin, head of the group, visiting Israel, charged that the cult is "entrapping Jewish young men and women into their manipulative clutches." The AJC, however, argued that the State cannot deny a religious institution tax exemption "simply because its theological beliefs extend to political and economic issues," even if the doctrines and practices of such group may be "abhorrent." Such a denial posed a threat to all religions, including Jewish institutions in their support for Israel, AJC executive director Henry Siegman explained. (JERUSALEM POST 25.12.81)

YOGA & ANGLICAN SCHOOL: "SHEARIM," the ultra-orthodox organ of Agudat Yisrael, reports that the Jerusalem weekly "Kawl Ha'ir published a notice for those seeking "good company" by taking lessons in yoga. "And where are these lessons given?" the paper asks. "At the Anglican School in Jerusalem, which belongs to the (MORE)

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Anglican Church in Israel. Installs school Arab children and the children of diplomats living in Israel study together with a not insignificant number of children from the intellectual strata of Jewish society." The writer reminds readers that Sephardi Chief Rabbi Ovadia Yosef has ruled that yoga and the other pagan cults are in the nature of idolatry.

MISSIONARIES IN NEW YORK: Missionary activity by Christian groups among immigrants recently arrived in New York from the USSR is posing a special problem for the Jewish community there, P.H. in the "JEWISH WEEK" (N.Y.) charges. (30.8.81) The Jewish Community Relations Council is said to be assisting Jewish religious organizations in preparing material in the Russian language to acquaint the immigrants with their Jewish background, weakened by the pressures of Soviet life.

EXCAVATIONS AT THE SCOTTISH CHURCH IN JERUSALEM: Yehuda Ariel of HAARETZ (25.12.81) summarized the work of excavators near the Scottish Church in Jerusalem, the historical background from ancient through Medieval and modern times, and some of the findings of the archaeologists. The work is a cooperative venture involving the Dept of Antiquities, Tel-Aviv University, Herschel Shanks (B.A.R.), the Society for the Exploration of the Land of Israel and its Antiquities, the Rothschild Foundation, the Protestant Institute and the American Holy Land Institute.

GERMAN-ISRAEL MUSICAL TIES: A music critic reviews the changing relationships of German-Israel musical ties, from a public uproar in 1962 when a program was arranged by the manager of the Ramat Gan Chamber Orchestra to give six concerts in Germany during its European tour, to the period when the music of German composers with German texts (Beethoven's Ninth and Mahler's Second) had to be sung in English or Hebrew translations, to the present "broad stream of traffic between the two countries" in the world of music. Protestant communities in Hanover and Karlsruhe have been sending their youth bands to this country.. (JERUSALEM POST 30.11.81)

BIBLICAL POETRY: A lengthy Book Review by Chaim Shertok (JERUSALEM POST 1.1.82) recommends highly "THE IDEA OF BIBLICAL POETRY: PARALLELISM & ITS HISTORY", by James L. Kugel, Yale University Press. "His book is a rare synthesis of creative interpretation and humane scholarship," the reviewer concludes.

ASSORTED NEWS ITEMS: (GENERAL CHRISTIAN NEWS)

Ethiopian officials have taken over the headquarters of the country's major Protestant denomination at gunpoint in a move that could have far-reaching impact on the government's tentative efforts to improve relations with the West, Jay Ross of the Washington Post Service reported from Addis Ababa. (18.11.81) The Govt of Ethiopia has given no reason for its action, and officials have declined repeated requests for comment. (INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE 18.11.81)

THE EAST GERMAN PROTESTANT CHURCH, apparently emboldened by church-supported peace movements in the West, has taken up a call by disaffected youth for a "social peace service" as an alternative to East Germany's military draft, the number having increased to more than 4,500 estimated objectors. (INTEL HERALD TRIBUNE, PARIS, 24.11.81) So far the Govt of East Germany has adamantly rejected non-military alternative service. Meanwhile, the East German government has voiced support for the growing peace movement in Western Europe while rejecting pacifism at home.

A feature article on the peace movement in Holland by Henrietta Boaz, HAARETZ correspondent in Holland, and the part of the Interchurch Peace Movement, a nonpolitical movement whose membership is derived from church societies, women's organizations, youth groups, etc. The movement is in no way connected with the Christian Democrats of Holland, but it has supporters in the leftwing parties; nevertheless, the Christian Democrats sent representatives to the demonstration, which conservative estimates claim attracted from 350-400,000 persons from all over Holland and small groups from West Germany and Belgium as well. The Interchurch Movement was behind the massive demonstration. (HAARETZ, 9.12.81)

ISRAEL'S CHRISTIAN SUPPORT: Ted Ripley, The Ridgeway Fellowship Evangelical Church, in a letter to the "JEWISH CHRONICLE" of London, (27.11.81) states that "over recent years there has been a growing desire (among Christians), we believe motivated by God, to become identified with Israel and to support her. The gathering of Christians in Jerusalem in October (at the Feast of Tabernacles) was a practical, and for some, a costly statement of that belief. The future will test our sincerity."

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