

"THE MISSION"

RABBI DR. AHARON KELLER OF NAHARIYA: HALF-TRUTHS IN "YAD L'AHIM" (anti-mission society) REPORTS. The rabbi of Nahariya, Dr. Aharon Keller, has told our correspondent that most of the reports of the "Yad L'Ahim" organization in Nahariya are half-truths for the sake of publicity. Rabbi Keller stated that the purpose of "Yad L'Ahim" is to be alert to all problems relating to the Mission and to warn the rabbis or religious functionaries locally, and to come to their aid as it becomes necessary for solving such problems. This work can be successful in most cases when it is done modestly and not in the limelight for the sake of publicity. This was the way the organization worked for many years, but recently an organization spokesman has appeared on the scene, one Aharon Kornfeld, whose lust for glory and publicity has unbalanced him. A striking proof of this may be seen from the following incident: "An unfortunate woman^{is} married to a man who, according to her, is a 100% disabled war invalid, with three children. One child is problematic and could not find his place in a Nahariya school. The woman came to me and threatened to send her child to the Mission for want of an alternative. I immediately contacted "Yad L'Ahim", seeking their aid. A few days ago the same woman phoned me to say that Kornfeld, the organization spokesman, instead of helping her, reprimanded her and made various threats against her. I ask, then, is it for this that "Yad L'Ahim" exists?"

"Another incident deals with exaggeration: In almost all the newspapers there appeared an item before Rosh HaShana (Jewish New Year) concerning two Nahariya people who had been baptized. I contacted (Yad L'Ahim), asking for the names of the persons involved, but they could only give me one name. On the eve of Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles) the spokesman had increased the number to three--all of this in order to publish the name of Aharon Kornfeld.

"Special damage was done to "Beth-El" in Shavei Zion (a/^{German-}Christian hostel for Holocaust survivors--SEE SELECTIONS 116, page 2: NAHARIYA). After I learned that this institution had invited a group of believers in the Messiah (sic!), Jews who were about to convert to Christianity or had already converted, I contacted the director and demanded that he cancel the invitation. The director complied with my request and canceled the meeting. I immediately notified "YAD L'AHIM" of the cancelation; nevertheless, the spokesman again published before Sukkot an item about the holding of a meeting at "Beth-El," again for the purpose of publicity, which this time was damaging to me personally and to the Orthodox community in Nahariya. The director of the institution, "Beth-El," claims--and this time rightly so--that the confidence he had placed in me did not prove itself, and he is being defamed even though he complied with my request.

"In conclusion, I suggest that great caution be exercised with respect to all the notices which are conveyed to the media about the problem of the Mission. I am also demanding that Mayor Sharir invite journalists from Nahariya and the area so that the two of us may explain the issue of the Mission in Nahariya."
(PUBLISHED IN "NAHAR-TON", a local weekly, 27.9.83)

NAHARIYA BAPTISMS: Two young Jews were baptized after they were suspected of "leaking" information to the Activists organization, "Yad L'Ahim," which had exposed missionary activity in Nahariya in the local press. This was reported by the "Yad L'Ahim" spokesman Aharon Kornfeld. Mr. Kornfeld said that the two youths, one age 27 and the other 26, were baptized in the sea off Nahariya two weeks ago on the Sabbath, in order to prove that they had not leaked information about the Mission in Nahariya. Their names are known to "Yad L'Ahim." One of them told his friends that in the wake of the baptism he did not intend to fast this year on the Day of Atonement because according to Christian opinion there is no need for fasting, even though all his life he had observed the Yom Kippur fast. The father of one of those baptized works in the Nahariya municipality, and confirmed these facts. He also reported missionary activity conducted with the aid of UN personnel serving in Lebanon who live in Nahariya.

Aharon Kornfeld, "Yad L'Ahim" spokesman, said that missionary conferences in Nahariya and various other activities take place from time to time at different locations in order to mislead "Yad L'Ahim" investigators. The spokesman also revealed that following previous exposures the missionaries opened two additional stations in Nahariya, one on Weizmann Street and the other on Kaplan St. The "Yad L'Ahim" periodical last week reported that millions of dollars are being poured into Israel for widespread missionary activity accompanied by modern psychological methods. It also reported that dozens of young Jews and veteran Nahariya families participated in a "brain-washing" seminar which recently took place at "Beit Yedidya" (a Christian hostel) in Haifa. (COMPILED FROM: HATSOFEH 18.9.83, MAARIV 19.9, SHEARIM 21.9.)

HAIFA MISSION: "TENS OF HAIFA JEWS CONVERTED TO CHRISTIANITY IN THE WAKE OF MISSIONARY ACTIVITY: FOCUS OF MESSIANIC-MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IN HAIFA. THE MISSION OWNS DOZENS OF BUILDINGS AND FLATS IN HAIFA AND CONDUCTS WIDESPREAD REGULAR ACTIVITY." (PHOTO OF "HAGEFEN" BOOKSHOP, HETHESDA ASSEMBLY) "At first I lost Dorit, and now my son Shlomo has joined them," says Yaacov Gaz of Nahariya sadly, now that two of his children recently joined one of the Messianic sects and converted to Christianity. It was two years ago that Dorit met a Norwegian UN man stationed in Lebanon. After a short period, the two decided to wed, over the opposition of the parents of Dorit, and she followed her lover to Norway where they were wed in an impressive local church ceremony. At that time the two did not yet believe in the Messiah, and Dorit's husband, although a Christian from birth, was not religious, and used to carry on and drink excessively.

Dorit relates how they joined the Messianic sect: "It happened in Norway a half-year after our marriage. During Easter week I happened to turn on the TV while they were screening a film about the life of Jesus. The film touched my heart, but did not affect my belief. A few months later an American woman came to our home and said that she spoke in Jesus' name. Her visit astonished us, but we listened to her for three hours, and we felt that she had something extraordinary. Following her visit I began to be more and more interested in Jesus, but since I had no copy of the New Testament I asked my husband many questions, and he told me about the Messiah. A few weeks later I received a New Testament from my mother-in-law; and as I opened it, there were tears in my eyes. My husband and I began to believe. Although we were happy together before, our lives had been empty, and now they were filled with faith in Jesus."

A few months ago Dorit returned to Israel with her husband. His parents were guests of her parents in Nahariya. "From the very first day they began to persuade me to believe in Jesus," Jacob Gaz relates. He himself was not convinced, but his 26-year-old son Shlomo began to believe, and was recently baptized in the sea, and has officially joined the sect of the Messianics.

Modern society, on all levels, in recent times is being powerfully swept by a religious current which is returning many people to various beliefs. Experts give various explanations for this phenomenon; and among them, the fear of a nuclear holocaust and financial crises on the one hand, and on the other—the affluent life and permissiveness which often cause a feeling of emptiness. People who have suffered lifelong social isolation are inclined to join various sects where they are accepted joyfully and with friendship. In the light of this, it is no surprise that various cults flourish and that the organizations of the Mission succeed in trapping many souls for their faith.

The "YAD L'AHIM" workers fight against these missionary sects, but they complain that the Mission enjoys complete freedom of action in Israel, almost without legal restrictions. According to them, mission property in Israel is increasing. The missionaries have unlimited funds. They build villages, buy land and buildings, promulgate literature in hundreds of thousands of copies throughout Israel. They have hospitals, rest homes, youth hostels, operate children's camps, provide tutoring service, arrange tours, parties, picnics, and trap many souls.

The Messianic Congregation to which Dorit belongs is apparently the most influential of all. This congregation is divided into several bodies which are linked to one another for transmitting information, holding common lectures and parties. In contrast to the traditional activities of Church missions, whose aim is to transform all religious customs and to lead up to baptism, the Messianic Jews do not demand conversion, nor even any significant change of previous Jewish customs. According to their belief, the redemption of the Jews is linked to faith in the Christian Messiah. According to them, the Holocaust and all the other persecutions and afflictions experienced by the Jewish people stem from disbelief in Jesus. The spiritual leaders of these sects claim that some the War of Gog and Magog will begin, in the course of which the Russians will invade Israel and in a bloody battle will reach the entrance to Jerusalem. Then, they say, Jesus will appear, the earth will open wide its mouth and swallow up the enemy armies, and the eternal kingdom of Messiah will commence.

This church is the most far-reaching in Israel, and the main focus for its activities is in Haifa and the north of Israel. Here they hold dozens of buildings and flats too numerous to detail, wherein they conduct extensive missionary activity. The most outstanding among them are "BETHESDA" on Allenby Street on the corner of Ben-Gurion Boulevard, which serves as a house of prayer and assembly. "ELIAS CHURCH" on Meir Street, 45, is managed by Norwegian Messianics. They also own a nursing home in which are found aged Jews under the influence of the church. "EMMAUS PUBLISHERS", P.O.B. 4581, Haifa, engage in the dissemination of thousands of copies of the New Testament and missionary literature, which is quite often disguised as Jewish religious literature. Recently, this publisher has produced Hebrew calendars containing passages from the New Testament. "BEIT YEDIDYA," on Tishbi Street, 122, a multi-storied building with kitchen and guest rooms, serves the Messianic sects for conferences and seminars.

At Bethesda each Sabbath at 17:00 hours prayers and sermons in Hebrew and English are conducted. In preparation of this write-up, I visited one of them. I detected a number of Israelis in the full/hall^{assembly}, among them young people who looked like kibbutz members accompanied by their volunteer girlfriends. The worship was led by Dr. Brian Pokroy, now on leave from the Rothschild Hospital, where he works as Chief Physician in the Admissions Ward. After a time of silent prayer, there followed the singing of hymns in Hebrew, accompanied by a piano in the corner of the room. Finally, a guest preacher from Jerusalem spoke in English, with simultaneous translation into Hebrew by Yitzhak Rasilov, a Jew who many years ago joined the Messianic sect. In the course of the assembly I met with three senior Messianics from Haifa: John Zeidan, a Christian Israeli, a manager of Bethesda, Dr. Brian Pokroy, who joined the Messianic faith following his marriage to Hava, Zeidan's sister, and Yitzhak Rasilov. The three spokesmen do not deny that their aim is to sweep as many people as possible into a faith in Jesus, but they claim that everything is done in proper ways without coercion or monetary inducements. "We cannot purchase faith, not with money or by any other means. Faith is a matter of the heart of man, and the Jewish people have no hope for redemption except they believe in the Messiah," says Dr. Pokroy. John Zeidan tries to undergird his remarks: "The rumours about us are false. The things we publish may perhaps lead people to the truth, but the Israelis who come to us are not assimilated but return to a true Jewish consciousness: The faith in the Scriptures without the addition of the Oral Law." Nevertheless, the activists of "Yad L'Ahim" claim that they have a long list of Jews who have received "financial aid" in exchange for their adherence to the Messianic faith. They were helped to emigrate from Israel and even employment was found for them abroad... (There follows a reprise on the Gaz family of Nahariya, the baptism of Shlomo, their attendance at a "two-week conference at Beit Yedidya," led by Victor Smadja, Arthur Goldberg and John Zeidan, and the intrusion of Jacob Gaz, the father, at the conference.)

In reaction, Dorit ~~claims~~^{charges} that her father is acting two-facedly; on the one hand, he tells her that it is important to believe in Yeshua, and on the other hand he spreads lies about the activities of the Messianic sects. Meanwhile, the activists

of "Yad L'Ahim" are following with deep concern the strengthening of the Messianic sects, and are in touch with representatives of the kibbutz movement, many of whose sons joined the sects after they fell in love with volunteer girlfriends. They are currently taking preventive action which, according to them, is aimed "at restricting as much as possible the success of the Messianics, which is one of the signs of the times," and which will pass away, as they hope, like every fashion passes. (BOX AT END OF ARTICLE: "YAD L'AHIM HAS ASKED OUR CORRESPONDENT TO TRANSMIT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: Anyone encountering missionary activity of any kind is asked to turn to "Yad L'Ahim, Beitar Street, 2, PHONE: 04-661978) (FROM "REHOV ROSHI, HAIFA," 30.9.83, Reporter: Yakir Rimon,

Photographer: Itamar Greenberg)

TIBERIAS: Recently, worshippers at several Tiberias synagogues have complained that unknown persons painted crosses on synagogue doors, the second time at the Yad Benjamin synagogue. In other instances, crosses were engraved on the doors with Latin inscriptions. The worshippers complained to the police who have opened an extensive investigation into the matter. It is possible that missionary organizations, abundantly active in the Tiberias area, and who have been disputing with the worshippers, are involved. (HA'TSOEH 2.10.83:)

GILO: A resident of the Jerusalem suburb Gilo, in a letter to "YEDIOT AKHRONOT" (13.9) complains of missionary activity, including the distribution of Bibles containing the New Testament, and claims that Orthodox Jewish residents have decided to expel every missionary from the area and to work against the construction of the "missionary" (Beth Shalom) hotel. (Levi Efraim)

"RESTRAIN THE MISSION": An editorial in the ultra-orthodox daily "HAMODIYA" (7.10) warns against "new and varied tactics" of the Christian mission, as well as the "idolatrous sects among lost youth" and the "Moonies" who have persuaded senior lecturers at Israeli universities to attend their international conferences. An earlier news item claims that an unnamed Christian demonstration in the Jaffa Gate area was really a cover-up for missionary activity. (3.10)

CANCELLATION: An unidentified Christian "missionary event" was canceled at the Jerusalem Hotel "Nof Jerusalem" following the intervention of the ultra-orthodox Agudat Yisrael representative on the Jerusalem Religious Council. The hotel management was then warned by the local rabbinate that its right to conduct Jewish religious weddings would be canceled unless the "missionary event" were canceled. The manager apologized to the rabbinate, claiming that he had not known of the nature of the Christian event, and agreed to cancel it. (HAMODIYA 11.10, 13.10)

DROPOUTS: At least 100 children of Soviet Jewish dropouts living in the USA have participated in summer camps organized by a Christian missionary group in Connecticut. Simon Lachman, a leader among Jewish anti-missionary activists linked to the Council of Jewish Congregations of New York, reported that several missionary organizations engage in campaigns among the Jewish dropouts, especially in the Brighton Beach neighbourhood of Brooklyn. The fact that the missionaries can speak Yiddish has convinced many of the parents of the children to cooperate with them. At least nine Jewish children were baptized in the summer camp framework, Lachman stated. (HAARETZ 26.9.83)

"WHY A CHRISTIAN AUTHORITY OPPOSES MISSIONARIES": THE NEW YORK "JEWISH WEEK" (8.4.83) published a half-page article by Franklin H. Littell, director of the Nat'l Institute on the Holocaust at Temple University, Philadelphia, attacking missions to the Jews as "wrong religiously and historically...but, as a price for religious liberty we all enjoy, we must defend the constitutional right of sects and cults to carry on their work." In the same article Littell defends the New Testament against charges of anti-semitism, claiming that it was

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"the rejection of the Jewish people because of a superseding myth ("the New Israel, the church, replaces the Old Israel"), an invention of the gentile church fathers," which resulted in traditional Christian teaching about the Jewish people being wrong. "It is a doubtful practice to accuse the Jewish writers of the Christian apostolic writings (later called the New Testament) of anti-semitism." He notes that Christians have also suffered at the hands of anti-Jewish clergy and rulers. In any case, missions threaten Jewish survival. (He also claims that Dr. Johan Pilon, founder of Nes Amim, originally came to the Holy Land in Mandatory times as "a Hebrew Christian missionary," but had what he called his "second conversion" rejecting mission.)

(SEE SELECTIONS # 115, PAGE 1)

"MESSIAH" ZEALOTS: Thirteen Jewish Orthodox youth convicted of causing a disturbance at a concert of Handel's "Messiah" in Jerusalem's main auditorium have appealed the sentence, which included suspended sentences and heavy fines. Their attorney charged that the court had ignored the religious sensitivities of the zealots, and requested that the sentence be modified to permit alternative public service in lieu of fines and suspended sentences. (MAARIV 12.9.83)

"CHRISTIANS AS BUILDERS OF THE LAND: THE MISSIONARIES PRECEDED THE JEWS IN DEVELOPING TRANSPORT & LABOUR IN THE NEW PERIOD". A feature article appeared in the "Histadrut" daily DAVAR (30.9.83) describing the work of Professor Alex Carmel of Haifa University, the sole Israeli researcher of foreign Christian activity in the Land of Israel in the 19th century. "In the middle of the previous century, the Land of Israel began to awaken economically after a lengthy period of retardation during the Turkish rule. The Protestant missionaries, who preceded the First Aliya (of modern Zionist Jewish immigration) by about 40 years, were the sole factor in this awakening," Prof. Carmel states. This activity was based on the widespread belief among English missionaries that the Land must be resettled by Jews, they must be converted to Christianity, and then Jesus would return to the Land and establish his millennial kingdom. This belief was also current among German and Swiss Protestants, albeit in fewer circles. The article goes on to describe in some detail the work of various missionaries and Christian groups, such as the Swiss Conrad Schick, the London Society for the Promotion of Christianity Among the Jews, Johann Schneller, the German Templars, etc. They built orphanages, leper colonies, introduced the first carriage service for transportation, paved roads, sparked the development of a carriage-making industry and other industries. "It appears that in Israel there is no haste to investigate Christian activities before the commencement of the Zionist settlement era, and there is no great willingness to concede that these Christian missionaries preceded the Zionist settlers in the economic and cultural development of the Land of Israel. True, the Christians were motivated by mission, but the results of their activity cannot be ignored," the writer of the article notes.

Prof. Carmel stresses that the missionary enterprise among the Jews was a failure, especially as most of the Jews in the Land at that time were very Orthodox. This resulted in their directing their energies towards other Christian groups (since evangelism among the Muslims was forbidden by the Turkish authorities). Prof. Carmel, who has been researching this field for 30 years, recently published the second volume of Chronicles of the Land of Israel covering the years 1883-1914. The first volume covered the period between mid-19th century and 1882, and was very well-received in Europe.

CHRISTIANS IN NEW GUINEA: A report by an Israeli traveler on Stone Age aborigines, which includes a note about the impact of Christian missionaries. "I met Negroid pygmies completely isolated from the world who were Christian believers who had heard of Israel and knew about Jerusalem. For them, Israel is Jesus and Via Dolorosa. The Christian mission here has reached everywhere. Until the missionaries came, the Papuans were idolaters. Christianity, with all its denominations, has been well-absorbed. One can find churches in the most out-of-the-way and forsaken places." ("SOFSHAVUA" Jesse Hammer)

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CHRISTIAN RESIDENTS IN ISRAEL

JERUSALEM CHURCH HEADS: Nine leaders of Christian communities in the Holy Land have issued a joint call for peace in Lebanon, expressed their concern for all the sufferings, and extended sympathy to families mourning their dead, appealed to world leaders, and asked for unity in prayer for peace and collections for relief of the victims among the Christian communities. The call was signed by Greek Orthodox, Latin & American Patriarchs, Greek Catholic Archbishop, Anglican, Syrian Orthodox and Lutheran Bishops, Roman Catholic Custos, Maronite Patriarchal Vicar, all based in Jerusalem. (JLM POST 28.9.83)

BAPTISTS: Under the heading, "TRIAL BY FIRE," Haim Shapiro of the JLM POST (30.9.83) wrote a feature article about Dr. Rob't Lindsey and the Narkis St. Baptist Church in Jerusalem a year after the fire which destroyed the church. The present tent sanctuary is serving the congregation while plans go forward for the building of a new sanctuary, which will have a large multipurpose prayer hall, and a three-storey structure housing an air-raid shelter, nursery and classrooms. Plans drawn up by Jerusalem architect Ze'ev Baran will cost some \$700,000 to execute, and are awaiting approval by the authorities. The congregation has collected about one-third of the needed funds, with the bulk coming from Southern Baptist Convention of America, and other Baptist groups, as well as local Christians and Jews ^{WHICH} have contributed significant sums.

DAVAR (7.10) reported that J'lm police investigators are soon to make additional investigations for the purpose of apprehending the arsonists who set fire to the Baptist Church last year. The investigation has focused on extremist groups which preach against the Mission, and there has also been cooperation with international elements in the search for the culprits. The head of the special investigating team, Officer Arye Schneidsher, noted that it will probably be a long investigation at the conclusion of which a decision will have to be made whether to continue the investigation or to close the file. Meanwhile, Brad Young, an active member of the sect, expressed his thanks "to all the friends, including Jewish friends, who have helped us with money in order to build the new church." He noted that 4,000 dollars were collected in the special account which the municipality opened for contributions following the fire.

"BETH-EL, A KIND OF HOTEL WITHOUT STARS": A two-page feature article, with photographs of the Beth-El Hostel in Haifa and of staff and volunteers, appeared in "KOL-BO," (29.7.83) a local Hebrew weekly, written by Ilana Vanunu. In the early days of the State the site served as an orphanage, later as a religious school, and in the 1970s was opened as a hostel with the permission of the Ministry of Tourism under the name of Beth-El Mission (American & European), whose declared aim is to provide lodging to tourists and pilgrims at a nominal fee without distinction of race, religion or sex. The attractive compound is divided into two sections, a men's residence and a women's residence, directed by a staff of volunteers from abroad. From a brief discussion with the staff, ^{AND} with tourists and volunteers, one has the impression of a consecrated place, the source of which is the fact that all are united by a Messianic religious movement. A neighbour lady comments: "They are blessed with a special love for the Jews, and not only because of the fact that Jesus was a Jew. They feel a kind of debt to the Jewish people for giving them Jesus--the Messianist (sic.), the Ten Commandments and the Holy Scriptures."

"Israel is the most important land in the world. Many things have taken place here, many things are happening now, and even more will take place here in the future," says Charlie, one of the staff of the mission. The director adds: "Many young people believe in God and are searching for holiness. They believe that God is 'here' and we encourage them to seek God so that they may purify their lives."

There are some 80 beds in the hostel and tourists come there from around the world. Among them are both Jews and Christians, and many are directed by the Haifa Port offices, the Egged Information service, through tourist guides, and even the Police have brought them tourists who, for want of an alternative, were sleeping in the streets or in public parks. Guests can stay for a maximum of three nights only. Three days a week there are vessels from Cyprus and Greece whose passengers fill the hostel.

Max Scheimann, a 49-year-old Christian from Colorado, U.S.A., is staff director, and has been here for a year. He has a brother working for a Ford plant in Nazareth. Max and his wife and children ~~are~~ ^{have been} learning Hebrew, but the children found school too difficult and have been studying at home. (There follows a description of "house regulations," accommodations, background of some of the staff, Janet Konig, Charlie Swinson.) Charlie is an enthusiastic supporter of the Messianic movement and is quite expert in matters to do with Christianity. "I love everyone, Jews and Gentiles, love the Old Testament and the New Testament," he says. A former U.S. Marine, he admits that it is difficult but worthwhile being here. Charlie is critical but understanding of the negative aspects of Israeli life.

Every Friday evening the staff gather in a prayer room, to which the visitors are also invited. The director reads from the Bible, interprets it, then they sing psalms, sometimes there is a film or a group sing. The article concludes with brief interviews of several tourists from Germany and Holland.

CHRISTIANS AND JEWS

RABBI SEYMOUR SIEGEL: A feature article about the rabbi who took part in the inauguration ceremonies for Richard Nixon in 1973, at present the director of the Holocaust Memorial Board in the U.S.A., during a summer visit to Israel. Speaking of responsibility for the Holocaust, he remarks that one must take into account the fact that not all Christians always act out of Christian motives just as not all Jews act always out of Jewish motives. Hitler himself was a Catholic. Does that mean that the Catholics are guilty of his crimes? Those churches which accused the Jews of the murder of Jesus certainly played a role in the creation of antisemitism, of which the Holocaust was its extreme manifestation; but now we see that all the church leaders have abandoned these teachings. Perhaps it will help in the future. (HAAHETZ:9.6.83)

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIANS & JEWS: A report in "CHRISTIAN COMMENT/OIKOUMENIKOS" (JLM POST 30.9.83) on the colloquium held in Amersfoort, Holland under the sponsorship of the ICCJ to discuss the search for peace, especially in relation to Israel and the Palestinian Arabs. Twenty Jews and Christian Arabs from Israel took part, among them Joseph Emmanuel, Gen'l Secy of the Israel Interfaith Ass'n, Canon Dr. Na'em Ateek, Episcopal pastor and leader from Haifa, Kalmon Yaron, director of Martin Buber Centre at the Hebrew Univ., Rev. Ibrahim Sim'an, Haifa Baptist leader, Dr. Geris Khoury of the Ecumenical Institute, Yehezkiel Landau, an Orthodox Jewish **activist** in the Orthodox peace movement "Oz V'Shalom," and Prof. Uriel Simon of Bar Ilan University.

"JESUS WAS A JEW": A feature article, datelined Oxford, headed "THE BATTLE OVER THE OTHER CHEEK", by Israeli correspondent Eli Shealtiel, dealt with the polemic stirred up in the London TIMES by readers and editorial response to Bishop Montefiore of Birmingham's charge that the Church from the beginning was guilty of antisemitism. The "Readers Letters" section, the correspondent notes, for several months contained almost daily reactions to a report on the 25th February of the Bishop's speech in which he reportedly charged that a good Christian reared in the Church received, alongside humane values, a good portion of anti-Jewish hostility. The Bishop cited various passages in the New Testament in which "the message of Jew-hatred was open and clear," and the Church must take upon itself the task of re-education. The general tone of readers' response was indignation and rejection of the charge. Only a few were willing to admit to the justice of the charge. Most of the writers refused to relate to the long history of anti-Jewish activities instigated by the Church....A tangible evidence

of the importance which the TIMES attaches to readers' letters was to be seen in an Easter Day editorial. The religious aspects of the holiday stand out even more clearly than at Christmas, and in the history of Jewish-Christian relations it was always the season of anxiety for Jewish communities. The lead editorial for the holiday related to the problem troubling readers for several months, and the editor felt obliged to express his opinion in the matter. The editorial was headed "JESUS WAS A JEW." It was written with great care, surveying the history of Jewish-Christian relations from the beginnings of Christianity during the era of the Roman Empire to the Holocaust and the establishment of Israel. The editor rejected the charge of some readers that the State of Israel bears responsibility for contemporary antisemitism. Whatever valid criticism one may make concerning the State of Israel, the existence of Israel must be accepted as a fundamental fact deeply-rooted in the self-identification of almost every contemporary Jew. The editor also notes the great contribution of the Jews to the shaping of Western civilization and the crystallization of the Christian faith along the lines of D'Israeli's remark that Christianity is the completion of Judaism. The editor also rejects the Bishop's call to love the Jews for their suffering whereby they had entered into "the essential mystery of our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ." The editor finds in the Bishop's remarks an undercurrent of "forgiving the Jews". After all, the hatred of the Church for the Jews was a deviation from Jesus' teaching. The Church must reject the sense of Christian superiority, which will then lead to mutual recognition and reconciliation, a religious challenge of the first order. The correspondent concludes with a paragraph of appreciation for the important role the TIMES^{has} played in improving Jewish-Christian relations. "It is hard to conceive of a more important contribution in this area." ("KOTHEET ROSHEET"

"JESUS WAS A PALESTINIAN": At the UNESCO Conference in Belgrade, ^{11.5.83} Yasser Arafat announced that the Palestinians had given the world Jesus the Nazarene. He repeated this message during his visit to the Pope in Rome. Readers may find this dizzying. If the Crucified One was a Palestinian, then those who have been accused of crucifying him are also Palestinians. Not so? Not so! On the contrary; Jesus indeed was a Palestinian, but those who crucified him were and remain...Jews! (KOL YERUSHALAYIM 30.9.83)

CHRISTIANS PRO-ISRAEL

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES: Thousands of pilgrims--from Papua to the U.S.A.--are arriving in Israel to take part in four international conferences of various Christian churches during this month. The Ministry of Tourism reported that clergy and laity from dozens of countries will tour Christian holy places throughout the land, take part in seminars, and in the Jerusalem March. The conferences include the first Apostolic conference of the Anglican Church with some thousand clergy. Another 4,000 will take part in the Christian Celebration during the Feast of Tabernacles. (HAARETZ, MAARIV : 19.9.83)

Reports on the Christian "Tabernacles" sponsored by the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem were carried in various local newspapers. The POST (21.9) quoted Embassy director Johann Luckhoff as estimating 4,000 participants (including 700 local) at the Feast. Foreign Minister (later Prime Minister) Yitzhak Shamir addressed a crowd of some 5,000 pilgrims and friends at Sultan Pool during the Feast who declared that "the cry of the Lebanese people has gone unheeded." Shamir noted that the gathering of thousands of Christians in Jerusalem proved that Israel was not isolated but had millions of friends around the world. He declared Israel's willingness to withdraw from Lebanon the moment its borders were secure against terrorist attacks. Shamir's talk was repeatedly interrupted by the enthusiastic applause of the audience. Jan van der Hoeven, Embassy spokesman, made an emotional speech in defence of the Jewish people, the State of Israel and the Bible, and appealed to the pilgrims to promulgate love of Israel in their homelands. He also praised the idea of the Greater Land of Israel and attacked

the way of "Peace Now." The enthusiasm of the participants reached its climax with the singing of "Glory, Glory, Hallelujah" and the Hebrew song "Hevaynu Shalom Aleichem". Today the Christians will participate in an assembly in support of Soviet Jewry. (MAARIV 27.9.83) A report on the Jerusalem March included a brief account and photograph of some of the 3,500 participants brought to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles by the Christian Embassy. (HAAHETZ 28.9) Some 4,000 Christians made a pilgrimage to Qumran in the Judean Desert near the site of the Dead Sea scrolls find some 25 years ago. In the context of the annual Biblical Dinner of the Christian Feast of Tabernacles, they were served traditional foods in a desert atmosphere. It took 100 buses to transport them to and from the area. The events of the week were somewhat clouded by the action of "Yad L'Achim," the anti-mission society, which released a press notice to foreign correspondents charging that the ICEJ was "missionary" and warning Jews against any contact with it. Also outside the auditorium "Binganei Ha'Uma" where most of the events took place, a group of anti-mission ^{Orthodox} Jews demonstrated carrying placards reading: "MISSION IMPOSSIBLE," "DON'T SAVE US," "WE ARE NOT HEATHENS." They charged that they have proof that the Christian Embassy is evangelizing the Jewish people by means of "love bombs." (MAARIV, KOL HA'IR : 30.9.83) The Christian Feast of Tabernacles Celebration in Jerusalem by Evangelical Christian supporters of Israel has led to the rise of similar celebrations around the world, according to Johann Luckhoff, director of the I.C.E.J., which sponsors the event. In Miami and Seattle, in Africa and India, Christians gather at Succot to duplicate the mass pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Evaluating this year's event, he said it was more spiritual and less political than previously. Israelis were invited to only one event, at Sultan's Pool, featuring Mr. Shamir, in answer to claims by some Israelis that the event is intended as missionary activity. Tour leaders are instructed to tell their groups not to proselytize. Lance Lambert, a British writer living in Jerusalem and adviser to the Embassy, says that it walks a tightrope between Israelis who complain of conversionist tendencies and those Christians who accuse it of not witnessing to the Gospel. The Embassy and Feast stress the Jewish roots of Christianity and the Jewish context of the Christian Bible, a Jewishness which, Lambert says, was destroyed by Gentile influence over the years. "We have a faith that in the end Jews and Gentiles will become one, but we don't ^{want} Jews to become institutional Christians," he says. Local churches have boycotted the gathering, he says, because "they accuse us of being politically oriented when they themselves have a very strong pro-Arab political orientation." If they want to change Jews at all, Luckhoff adds, it would only be to make them "more like the people of the Tanach (O.T.) and less like the Goyim." (J'LM POST 30.9.83) Also on the same date a photo story headed "CHRISTIAN SUPPORT" appeared in the POST, with one photo showing a participant wearing a T-shirt marked ISALAH 53, with the explanation by the reporter that "Isaiah 53 contains passages that many Christians consider a prophecy of the suffering of Jesus."

INTERNATIONAL SINGERS: Several clippings reported on the visit of the Int'l Singers from Faith Bible Chapel in Colorado and their volunteer efforts on behalf of the Israel Defence Force and the Soldiers Welfare Fund. (DAVAR 6.10; YEDIOT AKHRONOT 14.9; AL HAMISHMAR 19.9) The latter paper reported that threats on the life of pastor Rob't Hooley, founder of the group, had been made last month in Denver, and that the cars of his wife and himself had been vandalized, which he believes was the work of antisemites and pro-PLO elements.

THE THIRD TEMPLE: There is a strange working alliance between militant Orthodox Jews, right-wing Jewish nationalists, and Christian Fundamentalists, all of whom believe that the building of the Third Temple on the Temple Mount is of crucial importance for messianic religious or messianic nationalist reasons. Though there is a clear divergence in religious belief between Christians and Jews who work towards rebuilding the Temple, they willingly and enthusiastically cooperate. The Christians are encouraged by their leaders to contribute towards such groups as the Jerusalem Temple Foundation, among whom Stanley Goldfoot is a leading activist. "I tell them there is no dialogue. I can't accept their views and they can't accept mine. If they're prepared to help us openly, then we're prepared to accept it," he has stated. On the Christian side, Lambert

Dolphin, senior research physicist of a private group calling itself the Stanford Research Institute, is a leading figure. He believes there will be a Third Temple which may be destroyed within a decade or two. A Fourth Temple will later be built, probably at Shiloh, which will remind men of "the great sacrifice made on their behalf by the substitutionary death of Jesus 2,000 years earlier." He supports the Jewish Jerusalem Temple Foundation and the Faithful of the Temple Mount and has written that "gifts and contributions towards their work are most appropriate." Goldfoot (of J.T.F.) regularly addresses visiting evangelical groups, and one of his fans is Oklahoma oilman Terry Risenhoover. As nationalist impulses combine with religious aspirations to weave their own fabric of political demands, the Temple Mount is moving inexorably towards becoming a mainstream issue. And perhaps that issue is at the heart of the conflict between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East. (JERUSALEM POST 30.9.83; "IN JERUSALEM (LOCAL SUPPLEMENT) same date ↗)

"HOPE": A four-page feature article and photographs about the Christian radio and TV stations, "VOICE OF HOPE" & "STAR OF HOPE" appeared in the magazine "ANASHIM" ("PEOPLE") on 3.10.83. It describes the background and trials and tribulations of the stations located in South Lebanon under the dual patronage of Major Haddad of "Free Lebanon" and the more discreet patronage of the Israel Defence Force which permits staff to function in both Israel and South Lebanon. The TV station, which was blown up in July but quickly re-operated, is now a part of the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) of the U.S.A., while the radio station remains under the control of George Otis' "High Adventure" enterprise. Their primary function is to promulgate Christian ideals and to help the South Lebanese, especially the Christian residents there. It also provides a means of expression for Major Haddad who speaks about once in two weeks, sends greetings on holidays, makes political comment, speaks sometimes about God, "although he is not a religious man," Don Otis (son of George Otis), "VOICE OF HOPE" director comments. The staff reminds the correspondent of Jewish Orthodox penitents, but "in a milder version." They broadcast portions of the New Testament and lots of country music, news, westerns, soap operas, etc. The staff are committed Christians from various countries who feel led of God to serve in this area. "The New Testament commands us to love the Jews," the P.R. woman and secretary tells the reporter. It is all rather surrealistic to him.

CULTURAL EVENTS

MUSIC: An article appeared in "HAAHAKHA" (JERUSALEM) of May 1983, attacking the Jerusalem Philharmonic for deceitful/Hebrew translations of the texts of Christian music in order to conceal from the public the Christian doctrines the texts celebrate. Thus "Jesus Christ" (in English or in Latin) is often translated "moshiya" (Saviour), "goel" (Redeemer) or simply "Yeshua". A text "FOR THE SINS OF HIS PEOPLE" is translated "FOR THE SINS OF MAN". The writer, Shaul Angeli-Malachy, complains that these devices are an insult to the intelligence of Jewish Israeli concertgoers; and in any case, because of the strong Christian content of the music, indoctrinates Jewish listeners with Christian ideas, even in such works as Mendelssohn's "Elijah". True, it is the/wonderful music which attracts Israeli listeners. Nothing would be lost, therefore, if the music were played without voice and without misleading translations. In any case, why can't the Philharmonic find other music to play? Is there such a lack of Hebrew composers who can create music around Old Testament themes which have inspired so many of the great Christian composers? (END SUMMARY) Two "rave" reviews of Church concerts, one of the Wheaton College choir (CHURCH OF REDEEMER) and the Oration, DAUGHTER OF JEPHTAH (DORMITION ABBEY), appeared respectively in HAAHETZ (12.6) and MAARIV (26.6.83)

*** END TRANSCRIPT ***

23.10.83/mb