

MESSIANIC ASSEMBLY IN JERUSALEM

A resident of the Romema neighbourhood in Jerusalem reports that the sect of the Messianic Assembly whose centre is on Prophets Street has begun operating in the neighbourhood with distribution of books, tracts and propaganda among the local residents. The public is being alerted and urged to destroy all missionary literature being distributed to their homes. (HAMODIYA:28.12.83)

RADIO EXCERPT: Police investigators have concluded that the fire last night on Prophets Street was the result of opposition to missionary work. It was also revealed this morning that it was not the building of the Anglican Church which was set afire (as erroneously reported previously) but the building belonging to the sect of "Jews for Jesus", located near the Anglican Church. (6.1.84) All the Friday newspapers reported that unknown persons set fire to the house of Prayer of the Anglican Church on Prophets Street in downtown Jerusalem, with some speculation that it might be the work of the terrorist group T.N.T. which has lately attacked non-Jewish religious institutions in Jerusalem and the territories. The chapel was damaged, but firemen prevented the fire from spreading, and no one was hurt. Senior/police officials who arrived at the scene view these attacks on non-Jewish institutions with great seriousness inasmuch as freedom of worship is guaranteed for all religious groups. The fire broke out after 11 o'clock Thursday evening. The building itself was not damaged, but various furnishings and books were destroyed. (Compiled from A.M. & P.M. papers)

Photographs of the Messianic Assembly chapel and cleanup work following the fire while visitors and officials look on appeared in at least six newspapers/while (on 8.1.84) correcting initial reports about the name of the congregation, which was variously identified as the "Church of the Jewish Christians," "the Messianic sect ("apparently a missionary chapel" DAVAR), "Messianic Congregation" (HAAHETZ, HAMODIYA), although one paper (YEDIOT AKHRONOT) continued to report it as the Anglican Church. HAAHETZ also reported that the congregation "belongs to the Messianic Congregation, a missionary organization which, contrary to ordinary missionary activities, seeks to establish a church of Jews without conversion and baptism. The Messianics maintain that Jewish redemption is tied to their faith....One of the central activists among the Messianics is Menahem Ben-Hayim, and citing an anti-mission source, noted that he 'is active in various mission organizations and publishes a Messianic periodical called "B'SHUV", and is also among the spokesmen for the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem.'" (8.1.84) Also noted that there had been a break-in several days before the fire, which made it easier for the arsonist(s) to enter. The Messianic sect is a small sect which also has Jewish members who believe in Jesus and the New Testament. It is estimated that Jewish extremists opposing the missionary activity of the sect set fire to the chapel. (DAVAR 8.1)

The ultra-orthodox daily HAMODIYA (8.1) published a J.T.A. report on the fire without comment under the heading "CHAPEL OF THE 'CONGREGATION OF THE MESSIANICS' IN JERUSALEM SET AFIRE." It also noted "that no note or other sign was left on the site to indicate the identity of those committing the act. Nevertheless, it was reported that Jewish persons, some of them Israelis, were active in the congregation, and it therefore appears that the arson took place against the background of suspicion of missionary activity being conducted at the site. It will be noted that a year ago the chapel of the Baptist sect was set afire in Jerusalem against a similar background."

HAAHETZ (8.1) carried an editorial denouncing "the arson perpetrated on a Christian chapel on Prophets Street in Jerusalem," which it sees as part of a "worrisome" chain of terror acts against non-Jews by extremist Jewish groups. It lays part of the blame on a "frightful...neo-racism" developing in certain religious quarters among those "who enlist the law of Moses for a world view which in essence is antisemitic and anti-Zionist." The government, the rabbis and public figures are called upon to expose and resist this dangerous trend.

Denunciations of the burning of the Messianic chapel and similar violence were reported in various papers. J'lm Mayor Teddy Kollek expressed surprise that only the President of Israel had come forth with a strong denunciation while the rabbinate and others remained silent. He said he would press the matter with the rabbis. The Mayor's political party ("ONE JERUSALEM") also sharply denounced attacks on Christian institutions. The Movement for a Beautiful Land of Israel called for the offering of a prize for the apprehension of extremists, and would be willing to contribute to such prize money. M.K. Shoshana Armoslino of a major Knesset committee sharply denounced extremism and called

on the Minister of Interior and the Police Chief to make unsparing efforts to apprehend those responsible. A special meeting of the committee she heads would be convened in the Knesset this week, she announced. (DAVAR 8.1.84) An attack upon the media for the misreporting of the fire at "the missionary club of those who call themselves "Jews for Jesus" appeared in HATSOFEH (11.1.84), which did immeasurable damage to Israel by reporting that an Anglican church had been set afire. "How long will these irresponsible mass media people do as they please?" the writer asks. An editorial in the Histadrut daily draws attention to the setting afire of a Christian chapel in Jerusalem, "the gravity of which is doubled by its not being the first incident of damage to Christian chapels. It goes without saying that those responsible did not only damage the tabernacle sacred to a particular sect, but they damaged the interests of the State of Israel, which is proud of the freedom of worship which exists in Israel, and especially in united Jerusalem." (DAVAR 9.1.84)

An editorial headed "THE END DOES NOT JUSTIFY THE MEANS" appeared in the ultra-orthodox daily HAMODIYA (9.1.84), and began: Opposition to the work of the Mission in Israel encompasses broad sections of the population. This certainly does not call for illegitimate means for this end inasmuch as they achieve the opposite aim. The arson at the church institution in Jerusalem is likely to cause only damage, and it has serious implications for relations between Jews and non-Jews in the Diaspora. While Jerusalem's Mayor is bound to denounce this criminal act which took place in the city he was elected as its mayor, it is, however, not the opportune time for him to settle accounts with the rabbis--certainly not as long as it has not been proved that the fire was indeed the work of those opposing the Mission... (The article refers in this connection to the fire in a Teverya hotel which was attributed to antimission activists but later related to criminals.)

#### TIBERIAS ANTI-MISSION ACTIVITIES (SEE ALSO SELECTIONS No. 118, pages 1, 2, 3)

An account of the arrest of two anti-mission activists in Tiberias was carried in an Orthodox weekly (EREV SHABBAT, BNEI BRAK, 9.12.83) on charges of damaging property at a local hotel where "a missionary meeting" was being conducted. Intensive pressures were exerted on the authorities to release the suspects, and following 24 hours detainment Rabbi Machloof Eden and his disciple Yitzhak Cohen were released on bail and given a hero's welcome by their followers. (A brief report on the arrests and release of the men was carried in SHEARIM on the same date.)

Under the heading "EXCITEMENT IN TIBERIAS IN THE WAKE OF THE ACTIVITY OF THE MISSION IN TOWN," a local paper (Kawl HaEmek, Kiriyat Bialik--9.12.83) published a feature article by Sara Berger with a large photograph of an allegedly secret photograph taken of missionary meetings in Tiberias. The article reviews anti-mission activities engaged in by religious activists and cites anonymous persons describing alleged missionary infiltration into various circles in town--new immigrants, the needy, children, etc. Several unnamed children ages 11 & 12 are also cited as having received goodies from a Jewish convert from Safed who tries to persuade them to attend Christian meetings.

A group of unknown persons attacked the Hotel Nitzan in Tiberias while a religious ceremony was going on with believers in Jesus. They threw stones and smashed hotel windows, and one of the women participants was hurt by glass fragments. In recent weeks Tiberias has been stirred up over the activities of a group of believers in Jesus, which includes both Christian and Jewish believers in Jesus. (MAARIV 18.12.83) A letter in the JERUSALEM POST (23.12.83) from S.J.L. Gibb of Harare, Zimbabwe, stated that "on December 3, in Tiberias, I was part of a group of people that were verbally abused by certain Israeli citizens because of our love for Jesus Christ... I live in a country that is officially hostile toward Israel, but I am one of many Christians in Zimbabwe who have positive things to say about your people... Without Jesus I, as a gentile, would not even have access to the God of Israel and then I would be without hope in the world. Is there or is there not freedom of worship for Messianic Jews, and can Christian tourists like myself worship where they choose and be left in peace? If this freedom exists, what measures are going to be taken to protect such people from violence and harassment?"

The Hotel Nitzan in Tiberias was set afire last night. The hotel owners told reporters last night that ultra-orthodox Jews had been threatening them for a long time, warning them not to allow the continuation of missionary activity on hotel premises, and it was they who had set the fire. The owners had been letting out the hotel until last week to a Catholic (sic.) missionary group, and ultra-orthodox groups had been conspiring against the family and the hotel. In recent weeks the hotel had received telephone threats demanding that they oust the missionaries staying at the hotel and operating in town. The management complained about attempts made in the previous week to set the hotel afire, but unsuccessfully. In recent weeks there have been various mission-related activities conducted at the hotel, which focused on prayers and discussions related to Christianity. Recently, orthodox groups from Tiberias and from Jerusalem approached the owners, and with threats, demanded that all mission activity cease at the hotel. The owners decided to accept the demands and there were no further activities conducted. Last night, however, when they arrived at the hotel, they found to their astonishment that unknown persons had made a "pogrom" at the site, smashing furniture, spilling paint in all the rooms, and ruining much of the furnishings. While they went out to make a complaint to the police, the hoodlums returned and set the hotel afire. Firemen succeeded in preventing the flames from reaching the upper stories of the building, and little damage was caused. Police are investigating and arrests are expected shortly. (HAARETZ, DAVAR, HATSOFEH, AL HAMISHMAR, (YE DIOT AKHRONOT:- 26.12.83)

Police are holding two residents of Tiberias on suspicion of setting fire to the Hotel Nitzan on Sunday night. Although neither is ultra-orthodox, police are checking whether they might have been acting on behalf of ultra-Orthodox elements angry over alleged missionary activities at the hotel. (JLM POST) "The Tiberias police will do everything possible to apprehend those guilty of setting the Hotel Nitzan afire on Sunday night. The police have made one arrest but it is not yet proven that he is the guilty party. Through him we do hope to reach the culprits." This was stated yesterday by a police officer in Tiberias who is investigating the arson.

The Hotel Nitzan had closed its doors seven years ago following a family tragedy. "It had been one of the most beautiful family hotels in the north," the owner of the hotel declared in a sobbing voice. "Now they are accusing us of all kinds of awful things which are completely untrue...as if the Mission was invented by the Hotel Nitzan." The hotel owners note that since the publicity about the Mission they had closed the hotel finally, and had asked those identified with the Mission to leave the premises. Asked whether she accused the ultra-orthodox of the arson, the manager replied: "We don't know. The police are investigating and will bring the culprits to justice." (AL HAMISHMAR) The Christmas burning of the hotel is the latest in a series of actions harassing the group, a member of the (Christian) group told the POST.

In a telephone interview Kenneth Crowell said that until now the members of his group had not gone to the press because they did not want to cause bad publicity for Israel. "But now it's getting out of hand," he said. The hotel had been criticized by Jewish anti-missionary groups who claimed it is the focus of missionary activity. As a result, the owners closed the hotel and asked the group to leave. Another group member, Reuven Berger (a U.S. Jew who believes in Jesus) described the 50-member group as an unaffiliated gathering of Jews from Israel and abroad together with gentiles who love Israel. All share a belief in Jesus as the messiah and hold their meetings in Hebrew with a translation in English. The impetus for the action against the group came from Yad L'Ahim, the anti-mission group, and from a local yeshiva, Kolel Yad Rambam. (POST) 27.12.83

The Tiberias police now have five suspects of offences against a group of Christian residents of Tiberias, one being a well-known criminal who has confessed to the arson attack at the Hotel Nitzan. The other four belong to an ultra-orthodox group and are suspected of criminal trespassing and damaging property and persons and stone-throwing at a place of worship. The police have stated that there is no link between the hotel fire and the religious groups who have been harassing visitors to the hotel. It is also reported that representatives of the "Christian Embassy" in Jerusalem visited Tiberias and met with various elements in town in order to clarify the details of the incidents-taking place there during the past two months. (HAARETZ 29.12.83)

A deal was offered to Kolel Yad Harambam in Tiberias: To burn the Hotel Nitzan where Christian meetings were being held in exchange for payment of 50,000 shekels; but the deal was rejected, according to <sup>ultra-orthodox</sup> activists in Tiberias arrested in connection with the hotel fire last week. Police were told that the alleged proposal was made by one Yitzhak Dibni, whom police have arrested and prepared charges against him. (HAAHETZ 1.1.84)

On 2 Jan 1984 HAAHETZ feature writer Attalla Manzur published a lengthy report on the Tiberias situation, beginning: "Tempers are flaring in Tiberias for several weeks now. Extreme religious fanaticism is running wild on the shores of the Sea of Galilee inciting to violence—and in its wake, 'the missionaries' are being attacked and 'the soul trappers' injured. Echoes of the affair have reached the U.S. Embassy in Tel-Aviv and the 'Christian Embassy' in Jerusalem." Based on meetings with Shaul Zuala and his wife, Ken Crowell, Dan Yahav and others among the believers, as well as police and ultra-orthodox circles, the writer reports the facts and his impressions of the whole affair. He notes that, despite appeals from the orthodox, not a single person has come forward with a complaint of a bribery offer made by the believers. His impression of the believers was of a small community of "fundamentalistic" believers, devoted to Israel, suspicious of the press generally, and somewhat fearful as a result of the attacks on them.

Subsequent to the fire at the Hotel Nitzan, a letter was published in DAVAR (18.1) signed by the Town Clerk, A. Entebbe, denouncing the attacks on Christians and charging that they were mainly instigated by non-residents. "The town and its inhabitants denounce these deeds, which are in contradiction to human and religious freedom, and of the interests of Tiberias and its well-known tradition of hospitality. The municipality asks that everything be done to prevent a repetition of these incidents. We on our part will receive every guest, without distinction of religion or nationality, in a hearty and good spirit..."

#### NAHARIYA

A group of clippings from local Galilee weeklies/<sup>dated</sup> from last September to December belatedly arrived in January. Most of the material was covered in the national press (and several clippings received privately) and excerpted and summarized in SELECTIONS No. 117 (pages 1-4) and No. 118 (pages 3-5) dealing with Nahariya and related clippings. They deal with the baptisms of two youths, the alleged increase of mission activity in the area, along with alleged enticements to conversion, the activities of the anti-mission activists (including a blast by the Nahariya rabbi against the "exaggerations and half-truths" of the Yad L'Ahim anti-mission group in Nahariya), and a charge by a Likud M.K. (Yosef Rom) of "astonishing indifference" to increased mission activity in Nahariya by religious and civil authorities. A new centre of mission activity was allegedly opened in Carmiel on Rehov Misgav 22, and efforts are being made to combat it.

Under a headline: "MORE THAN 20 CONVERSIONS TO CHRISTIANITY IN NAHARIYA", Yoel Dar in a special report to the JIM POST (6.1.84) claimed that "more than 20 young Jews converted to Christianity in the past year, nine of them women married to Scandinavian UNIFIL soldiers, according to sources in the Nahariya Religious Council....Others converted after meeting European girls who were volunteers at neighbouring kibbutzim or coming under the influence of missionaries active in Nahariya. Among the converted are three members of the Gez family. Yaakov Gez, father of the family told the POST that missionaries sometimes help people in financial difficulties or help them to go abroad...." "My real tragedy is that I have a son, 17-years old, who is a synagogue sexton," says Yaakov Gez. "In one room of our flat we have a mezuzah and in the other an icon of Christ...." The Chief Rabbi of Nahariya, in a lecture in town, declared that "the missionary menace was increasing in Nahariya unrestrained. To our shame, mixed marriages are also increasing amongst the women of town between foreigners living in the town and others." He conceded that beyond speaking to and persuading people, nothing more could be done inasmuch as there are no other legal means. (HAAHETZ 18.1.84)

#### VARIOUS MISSION-RELATED REPORTS

JERUSALEM: Jerusalem police suspect that the same hand is behind the planting of grenades at various religious sites over the weekend, and they are also investigating the possibility that the arson at the Baptist Church in J'lm last year and recent attacks against Christian institutions are linked. (DAVAR 12.12.83)

**UCCI PIEA ON FANATICISM:** A letter signed by the Liaison Committee of the UCCI appeared in the JLM POST locally and in the International Edition (28.12.83/7.1.84), noting that "groups of radical persons, some of them indeed terrorist in nature, have again risen up to trouble the peace of Jerusalem and this normally happy land. As leaders of the UCCI we cannot but be concerned with this dangerous new development." Several illustrations are provided: "the recent harassment of persons of evangelical and Protestant background in Tiberias....the strange, almost irrational attack on Muslim & Christian homes and establishments in Arab areas...It is particularly important that the public be alerted to the dangers of religious fanaticism..."

**PRESIDENT HERZOG CONDEMNS VIOLENCE, INTOLERANCE:** At a meeting with the heads of the Christian communities at the Presidential Residence, Israeli Pres. Chaim Herzog stated: "Recently we have been witness to acts of intolerance by individuals who have no place in our society, acts which we condemn with all the force at our disposal." On the same theme, Cabinet Minister Yosef Burg pledged to do his utmost "to ensure the safety of every creed and individual." One is particularly aware that in a real democracy, one does not just do the will of <sup>the</sup> majority, but also listens to the minority, he noted. (JLM POST 30.12.83)

**RABBINIC RESPONSES AND NON-RESPONSES:** J'lm Mayor Teddy Kollek has attacked the Chief Rabbis and other senior religious officials for not denouncing attacks on Christian institutions. "When Jewish synagogues are attacked abroad, the first to denounce these are Christian religious leaders, and when they fail to do so, we accuse them of anti-semitism. Now when Christian chapels are burnt, the rabbis remain silent," Kollek declared indignantly. (YE DIOT AKHRONOT 8.1.84) A sharply critical article of the Mayor headed "PREACHER KOLLEK" appeared in HATSOFEH (9.1.84) <sup>AND</sup> claimed the Mayor had spoken out hastily against the religious establishment. First of all, it had not been a church, as erroneously reported, that had been burnt but a missionary office operating under the motto of "Jews for Jesus Christ..." The Mayor should know how to distinguish between a church and a mission office. Secondly, it has not been proved that Jews were involved in the fire, so it would be better to wait and see, before reacting. "TEDDY KOLLEK: I AM NOT A PREACHER". Under this heading HATSOFEH (16.1.84) printed the Mayor's response to the above-cited article, denying that he had been disrespectful to the rabbinate and religious establishment, but repeating his call for denunciation of all violence against Christian institutions, noting that the failure to do so might lead to retaliation against Jews in the Diaspora.

Two articles appeared in HAARETZ (13.1) and KOL YERUSHALAYIM (13.1) protesting rabbinic hesitation in initiating a denunciation of attacks on Christian institutions. On 20.1 the local English-language supplement IN JERUSALEM published a belated denunciation by the Chief Rabbis of the attacks. Fay G. Cashman added her voice to the chorus of denunciations, labeling the perpetrators "lunatic fringe." (13.1 IN JERUSALEM) (NOTE ALSO SELECTIONS 118, bottom page 7, "YAD L'AHIM" by same writer.)

**KNESSET COMMITTEES:** The Committee of the Interior and Environmental Quality of the Knesset will meet this week to discuss recent attacks against religious institutions. Meanwhile, the chairperson of the committee, Shoshana Almoslino (Alignment) sharply denounced the attacks and called for unsparing measures to root out the criminals responsible for the outrages. (MAARIV 8.1.84) The Education & Culture Committee of the Knesset was informed by MAARIV reporter Shiva Segal that missionaries operating in Tiberias offer money, clothing, flight tickets abroad, as enticements, at a hearing of the committee into missionary activity in Israel. Segal, who published a series of articles exposing mission activity in Tiberias, told committee members that he has the names of many children and families who take part (in the Mission) in exchange for material benefits. Ora Namir, head of the committee, charged that the "Christian Embassy" in Jerusalem enjoyed diplomatic status at the same time it was winning souls for Christianity in kibbutzim, IDF bases, Absorption Centres and schools. MK Shmuel Halpert (Agudat Yisrael) demanded that legislation be enacted prohibiting missionary activity, but MK Michael Bar-Zohar (Alignment) opposed the suggestion, warning that this type of legislation would impede freedom of religion and might become a two-edged sword against Diaspora Jews. (MAARIV 17.1.84)

"SECRET DOCUMENT": LAUSANNE OCCASIONAL PAPERS: No. 7 THAILAND REPORT--

"CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO THE JEWISH PEOPLE" (Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization)

Two articles appeared in the ultra-orthodox press dealing with the Thailand Report of the LCWE-1980. HEBEV SHABBAT of B'nei Brak (and its Jerusalem issue YOM HASHISHI) headlined the story "SECRET PLAN FOR 'SPIRITUAL DESTRUCTION' WHICH THE MISSION PREPARED EXPOSED BY YAD L'AHIM ORGANIZATION. A brief summary by B.Z. Eshel begins: A frightful secret document prepared by a group of experts on mission among the Jews of the world, which was prepared in the wake of a world conference held in Thailand about three years ago, has been exposed this week by the Dept for the Battle Against the Mission of Yad L'Ahim. In the preparation of the "action plan" were "representatives" from Israel: Menahem Ben-Hayim, active in various missionary organizations and publisher of the Messianic periodical "B'SHUV", who is also one of the spokesmen for the "International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem", and Ole Kvarme, Director of the "Casprai Centre" who engages in the preparation of plans for the promulgation of Christianity among Jews. (There follow various excerpts and summaries of the report, without further comment.) 6.1.84

The second article, <sup>(by S.A. Nalari)</sup> appearing in HAMODIYA (6.1.84), headlined: "YAD L'AHIM HAS EXPOSED SHOCKING SECRET DOCUMENT OF THE MISSION CONTAINING GUIDELINES FOR PROMULGATING CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE JEWISH PEOPLE." It begins: Yad L'Ahim...has recently uncovered a shocking missionary document which deals in the most fundamental manner with a sensitive subject whose name is nothing less and nothing more than "the spiritual destruction of the Jewish people..." The main points of the document have been translated into Hebrew from its English-language source and presented to the Jewish public as one of the most dangerous manifestations threatening its spiritual existence everywhere... This article is being written, the writer notes, in order to shock our public opinion, to warn of a grave and serious situation, etc.... The writer then proceeds to outline the background of the Thailand conference, the participation of the two Israeli representatives (as noted above), the distribution of the document allegedly among mission activists only, and various chapter headings. The writer notes that "this document may be seen as a detailed master-plan for missionary activity among Jews in Israel and worldwide. One may certainly view this document as a 'declaration of intentions' by the mission organizations from which we may learn their modes of operation."

One can learn from this document about fundamental differences within Christianity, the writer comments, concerning attitudes towards Jewish history and theological standing. Whereas conservative Christianity claims that, because of Jewish denial of the New Testament and Jesus, Jewish rights and privileges have been transferred to the Church, and this is borne out by patristic writings, persecutions, and the Holocaust, Christian groups have now come forward with a new theory, which was formerly advocated by only a few; namely, that the restoration of Israel should be seen as a fulfilment of biblical prophecy with "a slight addition" to the effect that it is a stage in the salvation of Jewry by means of their recognition of the Messiahship of Jesus. The Christian world, in order to advance this "salvation", must fashion this strange hybrid creature called Jewish Christian, to wit, Jewish believers in Jesus.

Dozens of groups have arisen on the basis of this theory, with various distinctions as to approach and theology, and the document tries to wend its way through these differences while seeking a common platform for activity. There is even an attempt to create a distinctive Jewish autonomy in order to quiet the Jewish conscience... The report also sheds light on recent pro-Israel Christian groups, which research has proved beyond the shadow of a doubt are nothing but masks for new missionary methods. (The remainder of the article is a summary of the Thailand Report No. 7 with verbatim excerpts without comment, and concludes: There is no doubt that the matters mentioned in this article, citing from a secret missionary document, are of the gravest nature, and this is understood by everyone. In order to cope with so great an enterprise, unremitting effort and might must be invested...at once.)

BETH SHALOM: A series of clippings between September 1983 and January 1984 detail the plan of the Beth Shalom (Midnight Cry) movement headed by Wim Malgo to establish a pilgrims' hotel and movement headquarters in the Jewish Gilo neighbourhood of J'lm, and the campaign organized by Orthodox Jewish opponents, and the announced withdrawal of the plan by the movement. The movement, strongly pro-Israel, has denied intentions of evangelizing Jews, which it claims it opposes on principle, although it supports

evangelism among non-Jews. A crucial document in the hands of the movement's adversaries in Israel was a prayer and appeal letter it published, in which was stated, among other things, that "Beth Shalom Headquarters in Jerusalem will serve many functions. It will be a hotel, a prophetic convention center, a missionary Bible school (followed by a strong statement of faith in "the revelation of Jesus Christ") and we have the inner assurance that through transferring the administration of our worldwide missionary work to Jerusalem, doors will be opened as never before..." (YOM HASHISHI MUSAF REHOV ROSHI, TELAVIV, 14.10.83) Movement spokesmen claimed the remarks had been misinterpreted, and that they remained firm in their conviction that there should be no evangelization of Jews in Israel or elsewhere, nor would they go back on their promise to the Municipality in Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the campaign against the headquarter project in Jerusalem continued, with demonstrations, petitions, public hearings, press notices, etc., and as noted, the movement announced its intention to withdraw from the project.

#### ASSORTED REPORTS ON MISSION ACTIVITY

**CHRISTIAN CLUBHOUSE:** The antimission society "Yad L'Ahim" has demanded that the Municipality of J'lm and the Ministry of Interior stop mission activity allegedly going on in Rehov Shivtei Yisrael under the aegis of St. Paul's Church. Dozens of neighbourhood youth are said to be visiting the basement clubhouse beneath the church, playing pingpong, billiards, and using the canteen facilities (at extremely low prices). Actually, the Church club has no competitors in the neighbourhood. Scandinavian young ladies from the Finnish School across the street regularly visit the club. Rafie Marciano, director of the Musrara Youth Club, relates about the ties between the young Christian girls and the young men visiting the club, some of whom have been invited to enticing trips to Scandinavia which, he is worried, may cause the young men to abandon the municipal youth club nearby in favour of the church club. The Yad L'Ahim ultra-orthodox are especially concerned about mission enticements. At the entrance to the club is a sacred library offering guests missionary literature in Hebrew and English, such as the Sermon on the Mount, the parables of the New Testament, a song of praise to Jesus the Messiah, all of which has aroused the ire of Yad L'Ahim. They have placarded the neighbourhood with signs denouncing the clubhouse. The Jerusalem municipality refuses to become involved, considering the matter an "internal church matter." Meanwhile, aside from threats leveled against the minister who directs the club and his wife, the club continues to function to the delight of the neighbourhood youth, who are not particularly concerned about antimissionaries. (KAWL HA'IR 16.12.83)

**"LIVING WATERS":** A booklet called "Living Waters" published by the Mission has been placed in postal boxes in Kiryat Gat this past week, distributed by two old ladies who are not residents of the town. This phenomenon, new in Kiryat Gath, has excited religious elements. The school rabbi of "Masua" even conducted a ceremonial burning of five books that came into his hands, as did several children from other houses where the booklets were distributed. (MA NISHMA? Kiryat Gath/2.12.83)

**NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST:** In the Rehavia and Kiryat Shmuel neighbourhood missionary tracts were inserted in postal boxes warning against a nuclear holocaust and calling upon Israelis to put their trust in Jesus the Messiah. "In the day of trouble and visitation, you will find the name that will save you," the tract declares. Perhaps this has something to do with the visit of the flight chaplain of the crew which dropped the atom bombs on Nagasaki and Hiroshima who, with a group of 20, is visiting Israel on a peace pilgrimage to Bethlehem. (MAARIV J'LM SUPPLEMENT: 23.12.83)

**"VOICE OF HOPE":** The TV station "VOICE OF HOPE" has been furnished with special equipment to enable it to be received in central Israel as well as in the north as at present. Rabbis in the north have already expressed concern because of the alleged missionary control over the station which has directed Christian preaching to its viewers, many of them Jewish. The Govt has been urged not to provide any aid to the station for this reason. (HATSOFEH 8.12.83)

**KNESSET ACTION SOUGHT:** The head of the Education Committee, Ora Namir, will submit a motion to the Knesset concerning increased missionary activity in Israel following a MAARIV investigation of mission activities published last week. M.K. Namir expressed concern about the MAARIV findings that missionaries in the north are giving money and its equivalent to children and adults in order to induce them to attend Christian rites and prayers. (MAARIV 13.12.83) It was a wise and positive act performed by MK Ora Namir when she raised in the plenum the painful and worrisome problem of the Mission, especially in the settlements of the north.

it was religious members who brought the subject to the Knesset, but now we see also those who are not defined as religious. Perhaps this will lead to more vigorous government action to prevent this harmful activity. Ms. Namir noted the large number of Jewish students in the institutions of the Christian mission. She stated that she had information that missionaries, under the guidance and encouragement of the Christian Embassy were working also in secular kibbutzim, IDF bases, Absorption Centres, youth hostels, schools and universities. Why does the Govt of Israel ignore this situation? she asked rightly. Where are the Orthodox and their influence on the Govt and State? Do the secular Jews disturb them more than the Christian missionaries? The Minister of Religious Affairs, Dr. Burg, concurred with her remarks, and agreed that the matter be referred for a broader and more fundamental review in the Education & Culture committee, and facts and statistics will be provided the committee. (HATSOFEH 16.12.83) A brief report on testimony before the committee by the Mayor of Tiberias who claimed that Jewish converts to Christianity were the most extreme in missionary labours. (HAARETZ 17.1.84) The Poalei Agudat Yisrael faction in the J'lm municipality considering entry into the coalition has demanded as one condition an undertaking to remove all missionary institutions from Jerusalem. (KOL JLM 6.1.84)

**MISSIONARY CONTROL CENTRE:** A nationwide effort representative of all streams of Jewry is now underway to confront and expose Christian missionary activity in Israel. Persons interested in joining this effort or in sharing information with us may contact the Missionary Control Centre, POB 4480 J'lm. All data will be reviewed carefully and professionally with confidentiality safeguarded. Only a level-headed and professionally planned public relations approach can succeed in bringing this vital matter of Jewish survival to the public eye. (LETTER TO JLM POST BY HELEN ROSEN, MSW, 21.12)

**HAIFA MISSION:** Rabbi Moshe Blitenthal of the Haifa Municipal Council has appealed to the Tourism Development Society in Haifa with the demand that the information about the Beth Shalom hotel in Haifa be removed from the society's publicity inasmuch as the hotel is engaged in missionary activity. The director of the society, in response, noted that the hotel is recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, is a member of the Hotel Association in Israel and of the Haifa Branch of the Association. Nevertheless, he promised to bring the matter to the attention of the directorate of the Society. (SHEARIM 10.12.83; MAARIV--Local Haifa supplement 8.12.83) Maps of Haifa for posting at bus stops were noted to contain the location of eleven churches, including Bethesda, the missionary centre, the Conservative and Reform synagogues, and only six Orthodox synagogues. An appeal was made by the Religious Council to remove Bethesda and Beth Shalom Hotel from the maps. (HATSOFEH 8.1.84) Dozens of copies of a missionary periodical were distributed among patients at Rambam Hospital. A young couple offered them to visitors and patients. Bearing the name "B'SHUV," a Messianic Jewish periodical, it attempts to draw the Jewish reader into Christianity by emphasizing the similarities between the two religions. It keeps a low profile but the intent is clear. "We are happy at the growing number of Jews who believe in Yeshua as Messiah and Lord." The Rambam hospital spokesman refused comment on the matter. (KOL-BO HAIFA 16.12.83)

**HELEN HAYEED:** A 1-½ page feature article in an Orthodox weekly (EREV SHABAT BNEI BRAK 6.1.84) describes the work of a children's rescue mission which today houses 900 children, and in the past has "saved thousands from the claws of the Mission and from descending into the world of crime." Various stories are related, including the desperate need for funds to rescue children from the menace of the Mission, the tragedies of secular homes and crime-breeding areas, etc.

**ANTI-MISSION CAMPAIGN EVALUATION:** In an article in the JEWISH CHRONICLE (London, 16.12), Chaim Bermant debunks the idea that "there is some dark conspiracy afoot to ensnare the innocent and unwary into Christendom." He claims that mainline Christian denominations have abandoned any attempts at proselytization, that only occasional cranks, many of them "ex-Jews", engage in such activity in Israel, that no one is bribed to send children to mission schools, that far more Jews are defecting to "modish cults" like the Moonies, Hare Krishna, and the sort of Judaism represented by the religious establishment in Israel and the Diaspora as well as the religious parties in Israel are more frightening than the missions. He concludes: "The campaign against Christian missionaries is only a search for scapegoats."

\*\*\* END TRANSCRIPTION\*\*\*

23.1.84/mb