

UCCI NEWS CLIPPINGS DIGEST

MESSIANIC STUDENTS: The January issue of "EPSILON", the student newspaper of the Haifa Technical Institute ("Technion") ran a two-page feature about Messianic activities at the Institute, with a reproduction of the front of the tract "WHEN THE MESSIAH COMES.... HOW WILL YOU KNOW HIM..." The major part of the feature was devoted to an interview and report on Jewish and Arab Messianic believers; excerpts follow:

At the entrance to the sports stadium a large crowd is waiting for the doors to open for the performance of Shalom Hanoch's play, "Waiting for the Messiah." Several "Messianic students" so-called are distributing tracts. One of them speaks a halting Hebrew with a heavy English accent, and he directs me to Yossi, a Technion student in the construction technician course. Yossi is chairman of the "Messianic Students" group, voluble and self-confident, and we exchange addresses for arranging a meeting. Aziz, an Arab Christian, a third-year chemistry student in Jerusalem, also shows up at the meeting with Yossi, who is Jewish.

"To be a believer is different from simply being a "notzri" or "Christian", Aziz explains. "The fact that I am the son of a Christian father doesn't mean anything to me, but what is important is that I am a believer." Naturally, the way to faith was easier for Aziz than it was for Yossi. The former came to faith by way of a Messianic congregation in Nazareth; but first his father was convinced, and after a struggle with himself he came to faith. He doesn't agree to the term "missionary" as applying to him. He is simply "fulfilling the mission that Jesus committed to all his followers."

Yossi, age 25, has been a Messianic Jew, as he defines himself, for two years and nine months: "I am a Messianic Jew and not a Christian ("notzri"), grew up in a Jewish religious home; but my observance of Judaism was not from the heart, and at the age of 16 I stopped being observant." Yossi did his military stint in a combat unit, following which he met an English Mesianic Christian girl who explained to him the principles of her faith. He later visited her family home and there met a group of believers who completely captivated him. After a difficult internal struggle, "I asked Yeshua to enter my heart and to clarify the whole issue of faith for me." Six weeks later he returned to Israel as a believer. When he told his mother, "she reacted like any mother: For me you will always be my Yossi." His father's reaction was more severe. "He refused to speak to me for a whole year, but afterwards we began to speak with each other," he notes. The situation at home is still not ideal, and faith is not usually a subject for discussion. The fact that millions of Jews were slaughtered in the name of Christianity disturbed him greatly, but finally he came to the conclusion that "those who created the Inquisition, the pogroms and the Holocaust were not believing people, were without love in their hearts, and Christians in name only."

Aziz hasn't had any family problems, but has had some problems with his student environment. While accepting his Arab identity, he is not a nationalist and doesn't engage in politics. "When there is a terrorist incident against Jews, the extremists are unhappy that I don't share their joy. They say I'm not an Arab but a Zionist," he explains. The social pressure only strengthens him in his faith. He doesn't look at people as Jews and Arabs but as human beings. The Messianics get angry when they are compared to various sects. Even though the external signs are different, the "I" disappears and is replaced by

an invisible figure who lived 2,000 years ago. Blind faith! How is it different from other sects? "We love all people, not only our group, and we don't try to coerce people, but seek only to spread the Gospel," Aziz responds.

Their activities are low-profile: weekly meetings, small groups, 15 members at the Technion, informal fellowship, Bible study, free prayer -- no prayer books, praying from the heart through Yeshua, about various catastrophes, which instead of causing doubts confirms their faith. "These are warning signs which prove the end is near," they say.

The group in Jerusalem, for which Aziz is responsible, is similar in style to the Haifa group, but without Jewish members. The national students group numbers several dozen members, 20% of them Jewish, with two groups in Haifa. They believe that Jesus is the only way to God, and that his crucifixion atoned for the sins of mankind, and their destiny is to spread the Gospel. (End excerpts).

ETHIOPIAN JEWS: Rabbi Eli Ben-Dehan, an assistant to Sephardi Chief Rabbi Mordecai Eliahu, at a conference on "Ethiopian Jewry under Changing Conditions" held at Jerusalem's Hebrew University, charged that "Christians, Jewish converts to Christianity, and mixed marriages" were to be found among Ethiopian Jews. He defended the rabbinate's insistence that all Ethiopian Jews undergo a symbolic conversion ceremony. (JERUSALEM POST 3 Jan 86)

JEWS FOR JESUS: Dozens of New York women, members of the missionary organization "JEWS FOR JESUS", have been integrated into the "Bonds for Israel" campaign, which has caused ripples in the Jewish community at large. The organization ran a fashion show with all funds going to the "Bonds" campaign. Col. Yehuda Levy, the "Bonds" representative in the U.S.A., has been permitting missionaries to be active in this field, to the dismay of local Jewish organizations who are considering severing ties with Levy. (EREV SHABBAT 10 Jan 86)

CHRISTIANS IN ISRAEL

BAPTISTS: The High Court of Justice in Israel has issued an injunction against the Jerusalem District Planning Commission to show cause within 45 days why it should not cancel its' decision disallowing the Baptist Church from erecting a house of worship and community centre on the site of the church destroyed by arson some four years ago. The commission has restricted the size of the structure to 350 square metres. (HAARETZ 2 Jan 86). In response, the commission has offered the church an alternate site in Abu Tor. The Ministry of Interior representative, Rafael Levy, told the court that the burnt-out structure took up an area of 80 sq. m. and the church now wanted a structure taking up 1,800 sq.m. This was rejected by the commission, not on religious grounds, but because the proposed building would not serve the people in the neighbourhood and would constitute a traffic, parking and noise hazard to local residents. (HAMODIYA 16.2.86)

NEVE SHALOM: The experience of the interfaith community of Neve Shalom near Latrun in trying to bridge the gap between Jews and Arabs in Israel is being applied to Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. The community secretary, Elias Eady, a Christian Arab psychology graduate from the Galilee, told a visiting British ambassador that he and four other members of the community had gone to Ireland in 1984 to train local Catholic and Protestant leaders in their "peace workshop" methods,

designed to overcome prejudice and stereotyped images among Jews and Arabs. (JLM POST 12 Jan. 86) The settlement was also visited by Israeli President Herzog last autumn, who praised the settlers for their ideals. (JLM POST 14.9.85)

"ISRAELI CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT": "We Arab Christians are loyal to the State of Israel, yet we feel like citizens deprived of their rights," says Naji Avid, founder of the new "Israeli Christian Movement", whose aim is to improve the lot of Arab Christians in Israel. Their program includes extending mandatory military service to Arab Christians as it exists for Jewish citizens, and getting Arab Christian representation in the Knesset. At present there are several hundred members of the movement, mostly academics. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 28.10.85)

"THE MISSION"

HAIFA: "The Movement for the Sanctification of the Jewish People in the Land of Israel" filed a complaint this week with the police against the "Hagefen Books" publishers in Haifa and Tiberias. It was based on Article 173 of the Penal Code, which states that "one who publishes in print, manuscript, picture or a representation something grossly offensive to the belief or religious sensitivities of others" may be imprisoned for one year. The head of the movement, Yaakov Zarfati, alleges that a large amount of missionary material has been distributed in the Haifa area, including New Testament cassettes in various languages. (VOICE OF HAIFA: YEDIOT AKHRONOT SUPPLEMENT 24.1.86) A similar article focusing on Russian New Testament cassettes appeared in the same paper on 27.12.85, with the source being the same Y. Zarfati. He was described as "the temporary chairman of the Committee Against Missionary Activity in Haifa." Asked why the committee was necessary in view of the activities of the anti-mission society YAD L'AHIM in Haifa, Zarfati remarked: "They only talk and do nothing, but we are out on the field."

The ultra-orthodox journal "YETAID NEEMAN" (22.1.86) under the heading: "THE MISSIONARIES ARE WORKING IN THE 'DARKNESS' IN HAIFA", featured a reproduction of the Hebrew tract "WHEN THE MESSIAH COMES..." with a brief report: "Haifa residents were astonished to discover missionary material in their letterboxes, which had been delivered in the darkness of the night. In recent weeks missionary activity has intensified on the part of various 'Messianic Jewish sects' in the Haifa area. Working for filthy lucre they go out on their vile assignment each evening under cover of darkness, disseminating literature about Christianity."

MAARIV (26.2.86) reported that the selfsame Y. Zarfati, age 19, youth director of the Kahane-led "Kach" movement, was interrogated by the police on suspicion of breaking into a mission clinic on Rehov Hechalutz in downtown Haifa. Dr. Pokroy, according to his wife, one of the Messianic Jews, worked there, but the clinic is now closed. On the bottom level there is a bookshop, "HaGefen", selling books, Bibles, and offering tracts about the Messiah Jesus and "Who is a Jew", according to Messianic Judaism, of course. The headquarters of the "Kach" movement are in the same building, but they deny any link to the break-in. The mission store manager, who speaks with a heavy English accent, says that "the Kach people are quite nice," and denies that the shop staff are missionaries. Meanwhile, in recent years there has been a spread of mission cells in Haifa; on Allenby Street there is "Bethesda", in Bat Galim a missionary clinic, and a hostel, said to be run by missionaries, recommended by the Tourist Bureau.

TIBERIAS: The missionary apostate Shaul Zualla of Tiberias last week threatened to murder a YAD L'AHIM worker, Rabbi Yosef Mimran, who is battling the mission sects in Tiberias. Additional details about this distressing affair will soon be published. (YETAID NEEMAN 6 Feb. 86) Reports in the Orthodox press dealt with a protest demonstration against the alleged 23 missionary bodies at work in Tiberias, as well as the Mormon University project on Mt. Scopus. The demonstration was organized by YAD L'AHIM and "The Society for the War Against the Mormons." (VARIOUS PAPERS 12-13 Feb. 86)

HITCH-HIKERS: A Missionary sect calling itself "To Hear and To Act" has recently been at work in the north of Israel. Operating out of luxurious new cars, the sectarians collect hitch-hikers waiting on lonely northern roads, many of them soldiers. In the course of conversation they lead them into a discussion about the Messiah and redemption. At the end of the journey the hitch-hikers are given an attractive New Testament. Danny Asulin, the social director of the Tiberias branch of YAD L'AHIM, told the press that the identity of the missionaries is known to them. A Parliamentary Query on the matter was also submitted by the ultra-orthodox M.K. Shapiro to the P.M. and the Minister of the Interior. (Various Orthodox papers 29-30 Jan; 17.2.86)

AGAINST THE ANTI-MISSIONARIES: In a hard-hitting article, S.Z. Abramov, a leading Israeli figure opposing religious extremism, attacked governmental and religious obscurantism with respect to missionary activity in the light of the anti-Mormon campaign. Relating the anti-mission campaign to the anti-Zionist religious extremists of Israel, Abramov underscored the legality of missionary activity in Israel as long as it is not accompanied by "material enticement". Although a law was pushed through the Knesset in 1977 banning the promise or granting of material benefits for inducing a change of religion, not a single case has been prosecuted.

The freedom to persuade people to change their political and philosophical views includes the freedom to change their religion and is a basic democratic principle, which Israeli law accepts. For some 150 years Christian institutions have engaged in missionary activity in this land with dismal results, and they continue to do so quite legally, and there was no basis for discriminating against the Mormon sect by requiring them to abstain from perfectly legal activity which other Christians engage in freely.

"The anti-Zionist camp have succeeded in brainwashing much of the public with the idea that the existence of the mission is illegal, and that there is a real danger of apostasy because of the mission's existence, claims which are totally without foundation," he argued, "and it is nothing but an exercise in demagoguery...which is harmful to Israel's interests..." (HAARETZ 1.1.86) In a similar vein the German-language ISRAEL NACHRICHTEN (24.1.86) published an article by Schalom Ben-Chorin on the subject of anti-mission legislation.

MAARIV (2 Mar. 86) published a feature article by Michael Sassar, former Advisor to the President, under the heading: "State or Ghetto?" The writer, describing himself as an Orthodox Jew, protests narrow-minded forms of religious extremism, such as the activities of YAD L'AHIM. In their understandable reaction to activities designed to cause Jews to abandon Judaism in exchange for Christianity, they "overreach themselves, see the shadows of hills as if they were hills, and see it as their sacred duty to violently oppose high school meetings between Jews and Arabs..."

JEWISH "MISSIONARIES": "Many of the Orthodox Jewish 'penitents' are not satisfied with what they have gotten but they become missionaries who seek to pass it on to others, actually to impose it on others, and to demand that others shape their lives by the criteria that they have adopted." (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 18.10.85) "The pretensions of the Geshet ("Bridge") society to promote dialogue between Orthodox Jews and secularists is throwing sand in the eyes; it is a one-sided bridge, whose meetings are missionary and coercive. One doesn't hear of the Orthodox experiencing or recognizing the secularist lifestyle... The hypocritical outcry of the ultra-orthodox against Mormon University missionizing pales before their own missionary campaigns among us..." (Shoshana Cohen, HAARETZ 26.12.85)

The Govt. of Israel has thus far not enacted legislation against missionary activity because of fear of Christian Church reaction. Those who oppose this legislation have suggested a law prohibiting what they call "the Ultra-Orthodox Mission." Joel Marcus, a senior writer for the daily HAARETZ has proposed this. He even claims that the present law (against enticement for conversion) can be operated against the Jewish penitents movement, being ignorant of the fact that the movement does not use economic enticements or control vast sums like the Christian mission. (HAMODIYA 13.12.85)

MISSION SCHOOL: "The story of Mira Lev begins in Tel Aviv, a good girl in a good neighbourhood in North Tel Aviv. Her parents sent her and her sister to the French Mission School in Jaffa. In certain Israeli circles this French Mission School is stylish. The studies in the mission school did not actually involve a development of some kind of specific religiosity... The fact that she studied at a mission school did not disturb her former lover, the heir of the "Baba Sali," Baruch Abuhazeira, a Moroccan Jewish 'saint'". (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 28.6.85)

HOTEL: The largest hotel to be built in Tel Aviv will be owned by a Christian church, it was learned by our correspondent, with the green light given by the municipality for commencing construction. The hotel, covering 2.5 dunams and 14 stories in height, will be located on Yefet Street in Jaffa adjacent to the Anglican Church, and will be operated by the church as a low-cost hotel for young people. (EREV SHABBAT 17.1.86) In a Parliamentary Query directed to the Minister of Tourism, the Orthodox M.K. Avraham Shapiro asked whether the minister was aware of the church-sponsored hotel and whether permits had been granted by the ministry. He also noted that the hotel would pose a danger of missionary activity, and everything should be done to prevent its construction. (HAMODIYA 19.2.86)

KIBBUTZ ANTIMISSION: "In the struggle against the Mission, kibbutz members also take part," YAD L'AHIM spokesman Aharon Kornfeld revealed this week during an appearance on the program "EREV HADASH". According to him the missionary assault is growing more powerful in Israel and the world, and YAD L'AHIM is gathering information on the subject on a worldwide scale... (SHEARIM 1.1.86)

KNESSET ANTIMISSION: "In the wake of the defeat of efforts in the Knesset to bring down the government on the issue of the Mormons, M.K. Meir Kahane (Kach) has introduced a number of bills (to) deal specifically with the missionary problem, which makes any kind of missionary activity, with or without monetary inducement, by gentiles or those calling themselves Jewish Hebrew Christians--illegal. It calls for criminal penalties for missionaries, their expulsion from the country and nationalization of their property." (JEWISH PRESS, New York 24.1.86)

THIRTY YEARS AGO: Rabbi Ben-Yaakov has raised in the Knesset, the problem of the spread of the Mission in the State, and described the gravity of the problem, offering various proposals for "uprooting this cancer from our body." In response, P.M. David Ben-Gurion agreed that the problem was grave but it was too delicate for full public discussion. He proposed that the matter be referred back to the Education Committee, and this was carried. (HAMODIA: "30 Years Ago This Week" 14.2.86)

DIASPORA ANTIMISSION:

ENGLAND: During December and January the London "JEWISH CHRONICLE" carried a number of articles and letters by Christians and Jews dealing with missionaries and "conversionist activities." In a sharp attack on mission to the Jews (27.12.85) Rev. Graham Jenkins called it "disturbing to the Jewish community and to Christians...The dedicated conversionist aims at a spiritual Final Solution, the disappearance of Judaism and the Jewish people... Mission to the Jews is a theological impossibility." On the same day Bruno Marmorstein was sharply critical of the "quite pathetic ignorance of Jew and Christian alike" in this area. He called on Jews never to "seem to be telling the dominant faith to give up a cardinal tenet in its creed" (by implying that "all missionary activity is per se unworthy and somewhat disreputable"). "Christian friends should be helped to understand our concern for Jewish survival...and a Jewish convert to another religion defects not only from Judaism, but from the Jewish people." He also appealed for more factual information by means of a survey of the situation. "My own view, subject to the findings of a commission of inquiry, is that missionary activities do not pose a serious threat to mainstream Judaism," he writes.

In response to Rev. Graham Jenkin's article above, Rev. Samuel Hosain of Fauldhouse St. Andrew's Parish Church termed the article "an un-Christian viewpoint, lacking in sensitivity towards other Christians as in understanding the New Testament...It was utterly appalling (to) describe the Christian Witness to the Jews as ... a form of spiritual Nazism." The writer cites Mat. 10:5-6, Gal. 2:9, Rom. 10:1, and denied the claim that "the majority of Christian churches have eliminated their missionary organizations or changed from mission to dialogue", citing his own Church of Scotland as still affirming the Christian witness to the Jews. (24.1.86)

Several articles dealt with the "invasion by missionaries" of Golders Green, "a thriving centre for Orthodox Jewish life", by the London Messianic Fellowship. The General Secy of the Council of Christians and Jews "deplored the activities of the fellowship," while Richard Harvey, a leading member of the fellowship suggested that "the easiest way to overcome us is to ignore us." (10 Jan. 86) Meanwhile, "an action program to combat the work of missionaries in Golders Green has been set up" by the local Jewish community. The aim of the program is to give people an opportunity "of seeing what they could get from Judaism." (24.1.86)

SCANDINAVIA: The ultra-orthodox weekly EREV SHABBAT (27.12.85) carried an interview with Prof. Yehuda Nini of Tel Aviv University concerning his encounter with pro-Israel Christians in Finland who are preparing for the mass exodus of Soviet Jews. "They believe that the entire people of Israel will convert to Christianity," he reported. "They are getting ready to make them "into better Jews by converting them to Christianity and sending them to Israel." He reportedly warned the local Jewish community, but they were evasive. HAMAHA NE HAHAREDI (The Ultra-Orthodox Camp) reported increased missionary activity in Scandinavia, especially in Denmark and Norway, which are very tolerant of missionary activity and permit it by law. Most of the activity is directed towards Jewish emigrants from Israel, the USSR and Iran. (14.1.86)

U.S.A.: "OUR ISRAEL" (10 Jan.86), the New York Hebrew-language newspaper featured a two-page spread headed "WARNING! MISSION!" including a partial reproduction of the JEWS FOR JESUS "TIME" Hanuka advertisement: "Y'SHUA SAID, I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD." Relating also to Eastern (TM, Hare Krishna, "Moonies") and Western (Scientology, Mormonism) sects, the writer, Gad Nahshon, concluded that "the chief danger is from the Mission and not from the sects." Rabbi Ruben Dubin of JEWS FOR JEWS recently published a protest against Jewish radio station owners who permit Christians to broadcast evangelistic propaganda. He called on them either to convert to Christianity or to desist from contact with those who aim their "arrows at the heart of American Judaism." (OUR ISRAEL 17.1.86; HAMODIYA 22.1.86)

"JEWS FOR JUDAISM" has succeeded in establishing a student-run chapter at U.C.L.A. in California, where over a dozen organizations, including four different Jewish Messianic groups, prey daily on the over 8,000 Jewish student population of the university. (JEWISH PRESS 27.1.86)

THE JEWISH NEWS of Detroit, Michigan, published a feature headed "SHOLEM ASCH & CHRISTIAN MISSIONIZING" (9 Aug. 85) to mark the republication of the famous Yiddish writer's best-selling trilogy on early Christianity (THE NAZARENE, THE APOSTLE, MARY) by Carrol & Graff Publishers. The reviewer quoted extensively from the bitter critique by Orthodox Jewish publicist Chaim Lieberman, in "The Christianity of Sholem Asch." Also noted by the reviewer was Asch's opposition to the circumcision rite; but he concluded that "Sholem Asch will unquestionably be retained in Jewish literary ranks among the most noted literary masters."

THE TEMPLE MOUNT: At the beginning of this week the U.S. State Dept. released File A648 for publication, the secret report of Count Folka Bernadotte, who was murdered by "Lehi" (Jewish underground terrorists in 1940s) in September 1948. Stanley Goldfoot, now a Jerusalemite, had the report in his hands that same morning. He was one of the men who shot Bernadotte, at least according to his own testimony....Last week Goldfoot, together with Joel Lerner, set up a new movement: Task Force for Strengthening Israeli Sovereignty on the Temple Mount....

Goldfoot is less well-known than Lerner (who spent time in prison after plotting to blow up the mosques on the Temple Mount)... It is now four years that Goldfoot represents American Christian elements which support the building of the Third Temple by Jews on the Temple Mount. These Christians, mostly Fundamentalists (Evangelists and Baptists), believe that the building of the Third Temple will also expedite the Christian redemption....Goldfoot met the Christian Fundamentalists quite by chance: "In 1981 an American Christian physicist came to Israel, and working with Israeli archaeologists he conducted investigations on the Temple Mount and turned over his findings to us. Afterwards, other friends of his came, the link between us became stronger, and they invited me to speak in their church in Costa Mesa in California..."

His present employers have not made him pro-Christian. Judging from his remarks, one even gets the impression that he despises them. Their strong political standing and their guilt feelings, on the other hand, he knows very well how to exploit: "They are an excellent lobby and they get pro-Israel decisions through the Senate and Congress. They also harness the media to our advantage. Christianity owes the people of Israel reparations that it will never be able to repay. I am prepared to accept aid and bondage from them, nothing more."

Do they acquiesce to the status of being exploited? he is asked.
"I don't lie to them. At conferences I say to them: 'You are enemies, murderers, and even your values you have stolen from us. You love us? Then please prove it.' They aren't accustomed to being spoken to in this manner, and they rather appreciate the sincerity." ("KAWL HA'IR" JERUSALEM WEEKLY 21.2.86)

OIL AND SCRIPTURE: "To search for oil on the basis of Holy Scripture is a distortion of the Bible," says Paul Hansen of the Harvard University School of Divinity, in response to a Wall Street Journal article concerning the fund-raising campaigns of U.S. Christian investors exploring for oil on the basis of Scripture. These groups have invested millions of dollars but so far without success. First there was Wesley Hancock who dreamed that God was directing him to the portion of the Tribe of Asher. He nevertheless made geological investigations before setting up the Asher Oil Company, but eventually his funds were exhausted. Moshe Goldberg, adviser to the Minister of Energy, knows them all: Gilman Hill, who set up the Moriah Company and "Elijah One", who wants to prove to the Jews that the way of Jesus is the right one, and believes that the discovery of oil will prove him right; Andy Sorelle, who was also led to the portion of the tribe Asher on the basis of Deuteronomy 33:24 ("he shall dip his foot in oil"), and who also added the best technology to his faith and prayers; and there are thousands of Christian believers, especially in the U.S., who fund these geo-religious activities.

"These people are not eccentrics walking around barefoot with a Bible and stick in hand," says Jackie Sherman, the geologist in Israel who represents Moriah and Energy Exploration. "They are professional people: Hill is a geologist, chemist and engineer, and Sorelle is an oil engineer." He describes enthusiastically inexplicable developments which took place at the Atlit exploration site. "As a geologist I believe in the wholeness of creation, and the description in the Book of Genesis actually fits what is known by science," he says. Sherman prays along with the crews before beginning work each day, but "I remain a Jew," he adds.

The YAD L'AHIM anti-missionaries are convinced that all this is a front for Christian Fundamentalists seeking entry to Israel for missionary purposes, inasmuch as the conventional mission approach is not effective enough, opines Moshe Porush, the anti-mission leader. The Ministry of Energy is not much concerned with theological issues, but Israel is interested in oil exploration. So if someone wants to pray while drilling for oil, so be it. (Michael Dok, HAARETZ 15.11.85) YAD L'AHIM has charged that "clearly missionary elements" are behind the "Elijah Two" oil drilling due to commence in February, the fifth drilling effort on the Carmel. "They want to prove to the Jews that Jesus' way is the right way," the organization charged. (MAARIV 13.1.86) An abridged version of the HAARETZ article appeared under the byline of B.Z.Eshel in the ultra-orthodox weekly EREVSHABBAT (21.2.86)

CHRISTIANS & JEWS

FALSE WITNESS: Two witnesses who testified that a man carrying a U.S. passport was Jewish led to rabbinical consent to his marrying a Jewish woman four years ago. As a result of the breakdown of their marriage, the woman sought a divorce and revealed that her husband was a Christian and a member of the Netivya sect. The Chief Rabbi of Haifa stated that if it is proven that the story is true, then the marriage is null and void. (SHEARIM 1.1.86)

INTERFAITH: A world conference of Anglicans and Jews scheduled for May has been cancelled because of pressure from the Orthodox community in Israel. (JERUSALEM POST 25.2.86) 26 Christian scholars from the U.S. and Europe are participating in a theological seminar at the Shalom Hartman Institute, co-sponsored by the Institute and the New York-based National Conference of Christians and Jews. The month-long seminar is an attempt by Jewish and Christian theologians to get at the roots of Christian anti-

semitism as well as to open up Jewish thinking about other religious cultures. They study the scriptures of each religion; including the Old and New Testaments and the Talmud and the patristic writings. (JERUSALEM POST 25.11.85; INTL. HERALD TRIBUNE 1-2 Feb.86)

THE JEWISH JESUS: Dr. Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, in a feature column entitled "A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE", expressed support for the Mormon campus in Jerusalem, given the principles of religious liberty in Israel, the numerous Christian and Muslim institutions in the Land, and the "iron-clad dependence" of Christianity on the Hebrew Bible and its' ties to the Holy Land. "I am not worried about the Mormons' and other Christian denominations' missionizing," she continued. "What worries me is the large number of books by Jews who write voluminously on Jesus - the Jew... Jewish scholars such as Geza Vermes, Hyam Maccoby, Pinchas Lapide and a host of others...seeing in Jesus "our brother," as Martin Buber referred to the founder of Christianity." A quotation from Hebrew University, Prof. Flusser's "Jesus" allegedly "proves that he is incapable of evaluating the Gospels critically," she commented. The reprint of Sholem Asch's trilogy on Jesus, Paul and Mary is another worrying sign. (BNAI BRITH MESSENGER, Los Angeles 29.11.85)

THE CASE OF METROPOLITAN SHEPTYTSKY: In the wake of an article on 13.12.85 in the JLM. POST describing the Ukranian Catholic Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky's rescue of Jews from the Nazis during World War II, reader Yakov Suslensky calls on Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Memorial Institute in Jerusalem, to recognize him and his brother Klementy as "Righteous Gentiles". (JLM. POST 26.12.85)

THE SECTS

"THE TRUE MORMONS": "The campaign begun by the YAD L'AHIM sect is nothing less than a step in the campaign to transform the image of Israel. The true Mormons are you and I, Jews and the children of Jews, Zionists and the children of Zionists." (HANOCH BERTOV, MAARIV 3 Jan. 86) Their argument is not with the Mormons, but with the secular Jews; they are the enemy. The ultra-Orthodox want to maintain a perpetual state of war with the Jewish unbelievers in order to keep them at a distance...The Mormons should not take this dispute to heart, for the quarrel is not with them..." (David Krivine, JLM. POST 2 Jan 86) "The public controversy over the building of a Mormon university extension in Jerusalem has created the impression that converting Jews to Christianity is against the law. This is not the case at all....In Israel, apart from a very small number of Jews who have joined established churches, there is one group numbering a few hundred Jews who are true apostates; but they have indigenous roots, pray to Jesus in Hebrew, consider themselves patriotic Israelis and serve in the army... Thus, the danger of losing Jewish souls to the Mormons is so marginal, that it can be ignored..." (Ephraim Lahav, JLM. POST 8 Jan. 86)

An advertisement by YAD L'AHIM in YEDIOT AKHRONOT (8 Jan. 86), headed "THE MORMON GOSPEL", featured a photograph of "a young Israeli baptized into Christianity by the people of Emanuel Church." After listing several names of purported Jewish Mormons, the notice adds: "3,000 Jewish apostates live in Israel, 5,000 young Israelis worship various gurus. "FREEDOM OF RELIGION--PLEASE! MISSION--NO!"

An advertisement placed in several Israeli papers by Rabbi Eric A. Silver of the Salt Lake City, Utah Congregation "Kol Ami" was entitled "EPISTLE TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN ISRAEL". The rabbi noted the long period of co-existence between Jews and Mormons in Utah, the minute number of Jewish conversions to Mormonism and the much larger conversion of Mormons to Judaism, the integrity of the Mormons and the credibility of their undertaking not to missionize when they give such an undertaking, their long-standing and unconditional support for Israel which should not be jeopardized

by ill-advised action by "those who themselves are unworthy of confidence and are unwilling to credit the word of their fellow-man." (15.2.86)

HAARETZ (17.2.86) reported that to date no decisions have been made by the committee of cabinet ministers set up to study the Mormon University extension on Mt. Scopus. Meanwhile, various proposals have been put forward, the most likely of success being the insertion in the university charter of a clause banning mission activity by the university.

BIBLE TRANSLATION: The American Institute of Holy Land Studies, the only Evangelical Christian graduate school in Israel, is now offering a two-year M.A. program in Hebrew Bible translation. "My concern," says program director Miriam Ronning, "is to train people to know Biblical Hebrew so well that they will be able to translate into their own language.. There are a number of campuses in the world where one can study Greek for translating the New Testament, but no other program where one can acquire practical training for translating the Old Testament directly from the original Hebrew." One of the students is from Korea who had begun translating the Bible into a mountain dialect. "I had studied Hebrew in Korea, but there are problems in translating besides language, so to be studying here with Jewish scholars is very helpful," he says. (CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ISRAEL, No. 18 Winter 1985/86)

LAST TEMPLAR IN ISRAEL: During his October state visit to Israel, the West German president met the last surviving member of the German Templar sect living in Israel, Mrs. Nelly Schumacher-Marcinkoski. (The Templars were Protestant millenarians who settled in the Holy Land between 1860 & 1914.) The daughter of Gottlieb Schumacher, a leader of the group, "Nelly", aged 90, now lives in a home for the aged in Haifa. (CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ISRAEL, No. 18 Winter 1985/86)

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