

UCCI NEWS CLIPPINGS DIGEST

"THE MISSION"

HAIFA: THE MISSION RECRUITS TRUMPELDOR: "IT IS GOOD TO DIE FOR OUR COUNTRY." This is the front cover of a tract distributed in Haifa letterboxes this week. . . It continues: "But there is one who died as a sacrifice for all men, and instead of being grateful to him, we revile his name, curse and slander him and his memory. . . without any justification. And who is this man. . . because of 'causeless hatred' for him our holy Temple was destroyed? Behold the man: Yeshua of Nazareth!" (That is the way the back of the tract looks.) (HAIFA SUPPLEMENT YEDIOT AKHRONOT "VOICE OF HAIFA" 14.3.86)

18-year-old Yaakov Zarfati, the coordinator of the "Kach" (Meir Kahana) movement in Haifa, was accused in Haifa District Court of breaking into a Christian shop for religious articles, and stealing hundreds of sacred books for the purpose of burning them. The offices of "Kach" are in the same building on Rehov Nehaluz, 10 as the "Christian Witness to Israel" warehouse and bookshop. (See SELECTIONS NO. 137, page 3.) The accused is alleged to have stolen 89 Arabic sacred books, 61 New Testaments in Hebrew, Russian and English and some 800 booklets and tracts containing Scripture in various languages. After removing them to the "Kach" office, he brought them to a wooded area on Mt. Carmel, and then invited reporters from the newspaper HADASHOT in Haifa to watch as he poured gasoline on the books and was about to ignite them; but the reporters, helped by a tour of Civil Guard personnel, prevented him from setting fire to the books. In view of the gravity of the charges, the judge ordered his detention until the legal process was completed. (HAMODIYA 17.3.86, YEDIOT AKHRONOT 18.3.86) The local journal KOLBO HAIFA (14.3) reported that a total of 3,500 religious books was involved.

KIBBUTZ TESTAMENTS: Secularist kibbutzim (communes) have been receiving copies of "the New Testament" bound with the Hebrew Scriptures from a Bible distributing society, and have been using them in their schools and libraries. A number of kibbutzim have recently approached the Ministry of Religious Affairs for Jewish religious books for their Bar mitzva celebrations. They also brought boxes of "New Testaments" which they had received from an unknown Bible distribution society, but for which they had no need. (HATSOFEH 25.3.86)

JERUSALEM: "Teddy Kollek continues to sell Jerusalem to foreigners following the million dollar contribution received from the Mormons," Rabbi S.B. Lipschitz, chairman of YAD L'AHIM, stated at a meeting with a delegation of American rabbinical dignitaries in Israel. A document in German by "Missionswerk" ("Der Weg Zur Freude") written by one Siegfried Muller, was produced by Lipschitz, notifying the Jerusalem Foundation of a transfer of 100,000 Swiss Franks for a neighbourhood project, the third one being funded by this organization. (HAMODIYA/YETAID NEEMAN: 4 Mar 86) M.K. David Danino requested details concerning the funding of a youth project by a missionary organization in Germany, but the Assistant Minister of Finance insisted that this was a private matter. (HATSOFEH 20.3.86)

JAFFA: The Messianic Congregation "Beit Emanuel" (may its name be blotted out) in Jaffa is flooding the area with tracts which have reached as far as Bnei Brak. In them the Christians explain how to finish the month during a period of galloping inflation, why the Holy Temple was destroyed, and such like questions which "make clear" to every reader the principle, which is belief in that Man from Nazareth. In one of the tracts entitled "Gallopning Inflation," the Christian

missionaries promise a good livelihood to anyone who believes in that Man. . . At the same time, it should be noted that the anti-mission department of the activists of YAD L'AHIM is counter-attacking by proving that this is all a missionary activity, and that the promises of the Christian missionaries in Jaffa are worthless. (SHEARIM 5 Mar 86 ULTRA-ORTHODOX)

TIBERIAS: Tourism officials are meeting with archaeologists who have unearthed an ancient boat by the shore of the Sea of Galilee in order to check out the theory that it may be from the time of Jesus the Nazarene. Tourism Minister Avraham Sharir announced that his office would allot all the funds necessary for the project in an effort to discover whether or not it was used by Jesus or his disciples. The ministry is ready to launch a major publicity campaign for attracting Christian pilgrims.

In the meantime, ultra-orthodox circles in the north are organizing a counter-attack against the possibility of intensified missionary activity in the area in the wake of the discovery of the boat. A public meeting against missionary activity in general is being held this morning in Tiberias and against the plan to link the boat find to Jesus, which the ultra-orthodox claim is untrue and is aimed at bringing thousands of pilgrims and missionaries to the north. (DAVAR 12 Feb 86)

The "archaeological discovery" unearthed at the bottom of the Sea of Galilee in the form of a boat 2,000 years old is already causing sleepless nights to various persons. The Ministry of Tourism has seized on the vain legend as if "that Man" touched or saw the boat before it had sunk, and it was decided to budget funds for bringing it to the surface. "We'll convert the city to a pilgrim site for drawing pilgrims from all over the world," the bureaucrats exclaimed enthusiastically. But the Tiberians are not enthusiastic, knowing how their town is "strangled" each year by the hundreds of Israelis who stream in each summer. They aren't interested to have this a daily occurrence, and are even more anxious over the expected missionary penetration. (SHEARIM 19.2.86)

DUBIOUS CONVERTS: A new missionary stratagem has spread during the past year, whereby Christians seek conversion to Judaism without severing their ties to Christianity and in this manner spread the Gospel as full Jews. YAD L'AHIM has notified the Chief Rabbis and the religious courts of this situation. Several of these "converts", when their deception was uncovered, remarked that they saw no contradiction between their conversion and their original faith, but on the contrary, "they felt they were better Jews with Jesus." The rabbis and religious judges dealing with conversions to Judaism were asked to make sure that the candidates for conversion be made to declare that they have surrendered their belief in "that Man." (HAMODIYA; HATSOFEH 24.3.86) See also MISSION DIASPORA (Los Angeles)

PRO AND CONTRA ANTI-MISSIONARIES: "THE ULTRA-ORTHODOX CAMP" (HAMAHANEH HAHAREDI) in a bitter full-page feature article by Israel Eichler (7 Jan) (headed "WHAT DOES THE ENEMY FEAR?") lambasted secular Jews, missionaries and idolaters. Angry barbs were flung at secularist Members of Knesset who denounce the Jewish "penitents" movement and efforts to introduce Orthodox Judaism to secular State schools, army posts and elsewhere. "The wild attacks in Knesset committees against the penitents movement, the warm defence in the Knesset of Mormon activity, if only to curb 'the ultra-orthodox offensive,' the impotence of the Orthodox representatives in the Knesset, are all evidence of an unholy trinity," the writer begins.

What does the Jewish secular enemy fear? More than anything else it is the penitents movement for the purpose of restoring alienated secular

Jews to religious orthodoxy. For this end they are willing to recruit the Mormons and to celebrate Christian holidays. Orthodox Jews, however, have not learned how to present their case and have instead alienated secular Jews even more. It is no use to enact legislation without teeth, such as the mission law against bribery, when it hasn't resulted in the prosecution of a single person. In any case, all missionary activity should be outlawed. Of course, the secularists could even use a law of this kind against efforts to win Jews to Orthodoxy! The best weapon in defending the Torah in the face of the relentless battle by secularists against the penitents movement is an even greater information offensive on behalf of the movement.

YAD L'AHIM: "HAARETZ" (7 Mar 86) published a feature under the byline of Nadav Shragai concerning the "under cover" activities of the anti-mission society. These included night time penetration of Christian and missionary institutions, under cover agents who posed as inquirers or believers, bribing of employees in the institutions, photocopying documents, recruiting of "apostates" and others to supply inside information about Christian and missionary activities.

There are 15 official branches of YAD L'AHIM in Israel and dozens of mobile operational points, with hundreds of paid agents and thousands of registered volunteers. At its disposal are vehicles, intercoms, photo equipment, rented flats and even disguises. Only a small part of its budget has been funded by government offices with which it has links (among them the Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Education). Its main source of income is overseas and among Israeli ultra-orthodox Jews who last year were required to contribute 5,000 old shekels per head; this year it will probably be 10 new shekels (10,000 old shekels).

They claim to have a list of 4,000 "apostates," among whom only a few are truly convinced, the others being motivated by greed; and they provide a fertile field for "double agents". Through them information is provided various agencies and officials for the purpose of deporting disguised missionaries or preventing entry to unwanted missionaries, such as one "prophet" by name of Jack Fact.

YAVNEEL: Deborah Frankel, the wife of the local rabbi, states: "Sometimes I feel as if I were in an Arab village. People stare at me with strange fearful looks, a mixture of hatred and fear. Why? Because of a handful of inciters who are trying to build themselves up at the expense of Orthodox Jews. They spread stories that we will close streets (on the Sabbath) and throw stones (at vehicles). What lies! We are moderates and have never pushed religion on others. It's the secularists who are harassing us. There are three families of missionaries in Yavneel from JEWS FOR JESUS, and I asked someone, 'Why don't you fight against them, why don't you protest?' And how does he answer me? 'The missionaries are upright and quiet.' And when I say, 'Yes, but they are Christians,' he gets angry and says, 'You're a racist!' How absurd! I'm a racist because I don't want missionaries here, but maybe he's a racist because he can't bear the sight of black-frocked bearded Jews?" (YEDIOT AKHRONOT)

KFAR GILADI: Last Sabbath a young American Jew had a "bar mitzva" in which a Reform rabbi, Christian clergy and Jewish and Christian laity took part in the framework of a group called "The National Council for Christians and Jews." The kibbutz department involved in hosting guests has decided to promote "variegated" bar mitzvas with the participation of rabbis and Christian clergy, which is a grave danger, especially for the kibbutz youth who are cut off from everything Jewish. (HAMODIYA 18.3.86)

MISSION DIASPORA

ENGLAND: "ISRAEL MUST BE WIPED OFF THE MAP!" Whoever will not believe this is invited to a persuasive conversation by means of sexual seduction with well-built beauties. A new sect, "Persuaders for Jesus" has begun operating, and its leader, Peter Archide, has called on female activists in the sect to seduce potential members with their bodies! This Christian sect believes in two basic tenets: (a) that Judaism disturbs the good life of the Christian world, and (b) that the State of Israel strengthens the Jewish world. Therefore, in order to destroy the Jewish world, one must liquidate the State of Israel.

Only last week two beauties distributing tracts headed "For Jesus' Sake", approached me and asked if I agreed with them, and tried to seduce me. Meanwhile a British M.P. has attacked the activity as "a grave violation of the Race Relations Act." (BUL, TEL AVIV Issue 1034)

"MISSIONARY DECEIT": The Council of Christians and Jews has expressed its "concern" about missionary activity and "deplored" the use of "deceptive" methods, in a statement from its executive. The C.C.J. "deplores any form of deception in evangelisation and targeting of Jews for special missionary activity." The statement was prepared by a joint Jewish-Christian working party. (JEWISH CHRONICLE 14.3.86)

U.S.A.: (OAK PARK, MICH.) Calling himself a "completed Jew," Dr. Ben David Lew of Oak Park, spoke at Viscount Hotel about his experiences during the Holocaust, and how he came to "find peace" through his belief in Jesus as "meshiach." The meeting was sponsored by the Fellowship Baptist Church in West Berlin, N.J. He stopped frequently to avow that he was born a Jew and would die a Jew and prayed for those "who don't believe in the messiah". A member of Israel's Evangelistic Mission in Michigan, he has written a book, From Hitler's Hell to God's Peace, and also has his own TV program.

Ruth Respler, president of "Children of Holocaust Survivors," who attended the meeting, disputed Lew's statement that "God hears our prayers when they come from the heart." She asked later: "What about the six million who died? Didn't they pray from the heart?" A group of 40 confirmation students were brought in to the meeting, and afterwards asked questions about alleged antisemitism in the New Testament. Some of the students were moved by Lew's holocaust story, but were upset that he didn't answer questions directly. The rabbi of the group, Fred J. Neulander, of Cong. Mkor Shalom in Mt. Laurel, N.J., stated that "the kids were outraged with the abuse of the Holocaust. . . You cannot be Christian and Jewish at the same time." Young Jews need to be able to handle such discussions, according to Neulander. (JEWISH COMMUNITY VOICE; Cherry Hill, N.J., 2 Oct 85)

LOS ANGELES: Richard and Maureen Anstey, Canadian missionaries affiliated with Mission, British Columbia Church, having a Jerusalem affiliate, succeeded in convincing an Orthodox Jewish rabbinic court that they were sincere in their desire to convert to Judaism and to settle in Israel. As a result when their missionary motives were exposed, the rabbi in charge of the "beit din" sent a special document to the Israeli Chief Rabbinate canceling the conversion. The Israeli rabbinate recently announced new strict measures to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. (BNAI BRITH MESSENGER, LOS ANGELES: 1 Nov 85)

Eli Goldberg of L.A., in a letter to "JEWISH PRESS" (21.2.86), complains of "intimidation for years" on Fairfax Avenue, L.A., "an area populated primarily by elderly Jews, and a hotbed of zealous Christian missionaries."

In an effort to combat missionary proselytizing in the Jewish community, the Hassidic group "Habad" held a four-day seminar over a one-week period to train mental health professionals and religious leaders to fight what they perceive as a growing problem. Dr. Steve Bailey, conference chairman and clinical director of "Habad's" mental health program, said there are a number of techniques counselors were taught. . . "to focus on the emotional state of youngsters and not the theological issue." Topics included Mormons, "Jews for Jesus," fundamentalist Christianity and mind control. Rabbi Stephen Robbins of Beverly Hills Temple Emanuel talked about Messianic Judaism and how they see themselves as a fifth denomination of Judaism. "They proselytize Jews as Jews, and that can be a problem," he said, "because they say it's all right to accept Jesus and be Jewish." (BNAI BRITH MESSENGER, L.A. 22.11.95)

NEW YORK (Albany): The activities of cult and missionary groups aimed at Jewish students are currently on the increase at the State University of New York in Albany (SUNYA), according to Jay Kellman, Exec. Director of the Jewish Campus Commission. "The real danger is the missionary activity in the dorms," he claims. The three Jewish student groups on campus are monitoring the situation. (JEWISH WORLD, Albany, N.Y., 22.11.86)

Reuven Kaplan, the U.S. representative of YAD L'AHIM, at the annual Labour Day Weekend of the Young Israel Collegiates, pretended to be a Hebrew Christian defending his position during one of the sessions. He stimulated heated arguments and vigorous debates on basic issues of Jewish faith and Christian theology before revealing his true identity. He then conducted "a fascinating in-depth session on the frightening dimension of the missionary threat today." (YOUNG ISRAEL VIEWPOINT N.Y. OCT 85)

A two-page feature article in the New York Israeli emigre Hebrew-language publication (YISRAEL SHELANU 21.2.86) by Gad Nahshon, headlined "MY DAUGHTER DEJECTED TO JEWS FOR JESUS", gave "the personal story of Dr. Zviya Segal-Naftali, a native Israeli sociologist living in the U.S. with her chemical engineer husband, whose daughter Dafna fell into the net of a missionary sect." Dafna, a talented young girl, with ambitions for a musical career, decided to join "JEWS FOR JESUS," the sophisticated missionary organization preying on the Jewish-Israeli community in the U.S. and Israel. She is now roaming the world with her non-Jewish husband in a musical group, apparently happy in her role as "a messenger of Jesus," whom she regards as the redeemer of mankind. (There follows an interview with the mother, Dr. Zviya Segal-Naftali, focusing on the question of whether Dafna is completely "lost to the people of Israel.") Excerpts follow:

"I am fighting with all my power not to cut off contact with her; for now she remains in touch, and this is the most effective way." How did Dafna come to JEWS FOR JESUS? "Through a bohemian musician on cocaine who one day became a born-again Christian. At the same time she met activists in JFJ at N.Y.U., started to attend their Bible studies. As an Israeli, I had no idea of the New Testament and Christianity, and no spiritual antibodies. I started to attend their activities in order to understand what was happening, but my husband was away from home and I was too busy. When she told me she was going to be baptized, I was shocked, and then she got married with her Christian boyfriend. When I heard that she was traveling to Israel, I was appalled, and we had a bitter quarrel. I told her that 'you are betraying values that are sacred to me,' but she replied that God had sent her to Israel and He was more important than her mother. It was then I decided to study the subject inside and out.

"I consulted with Prof. Egon Maier of Brooklyn College, who referred me to the Task Force dealing with the war against the Mission and

Sects of the Jewish Community Council of N.Y. They concentrate mainly on the "Moonies" and Scientology and not on JFJ. In the U.S. there is no group devoted to this issue as it affects the second generation of U.S. Israelis, but in Israel there is a group called YAD L'AHIM which is effective. I also discovered an expert, Dr. Zvi Sobol of Haifa University who has written a book on the Hebrew Christians (HEBREW CHRISTIANITY: THE 13TH TRIBE), and he promised to help and was willing to meet my daughter. In Brooklyn there is also Rabbi Fine, and in Philadelphia a new group JEWS FOR JUDAISM, headed by Motti Berger and Larry Levy, a defector from JEWS FOR JESUS."

Why do they want Jews to recognize Jesus?

"It's nothing new. In America the missionary movement to the Jews began in the 1880's . . . it's also tied in with the revival of fundamentalism, 'the Moral Majority' and the return to religion of many young Americans. Since Jews were the first to see Jesus and weren't impressed by him and his ideas, it's important for them that the Jew acknowledge his error. The Jews have to return to Israel and convert to Christianity; and until they do, evil will not disappear from the earth. They believe the Jews are the Chosen People. At the same time in the writings of Christian Americans one finds attacks on the Jews and warnings that they will burn in the fires of hell."

(There follows a description of the birth of JFJ, based on Moishe Rosen's story JEWS FOR JESUS and various data about missionary groups, Messianic Jews, and a mixed evaluation of their membership): "It may be that some of them are sincere, they want to be pioneers, they demonstrate love for Zionism and Israel, they celebrate Jewish festivals. . . they study the Hebrew Bible only to find signs of Jesus in it, they hate rabbinic talmudic Judaism, and term it a forgery. . . they sell pamphlets and their periodical 'ISSUES' frequently attacks the Jewish people, and they attack the Talmud. . ."

The feature concludes with Dr. Naftali's statement: "Who would have believed that my daughter, a talented girl with a future in computers and not a castaway, would be caught by this?! Who knows; maybe she'll end up with Habad (ultra-orthodox hassidic sect)!"

"EXIT COUNSELING": HADADSSAH MAGAZINE (May 1985) and JEWISH WEEK (New York 3 May 85) carried lengthy feature articles about cults, but mainly focusing on "JEWS FOR JESUS." The HADASSAH article offered diverse opinions about the extent and success of JFJ and the cults, and defections from them. One source, David Bromley, co-author of "STRANGE GODS: THE GREAT AMERICAN CULT SCARE" (Beacon) insisted that "the cults are declining because of the decline of idealism among youth in general, and there is no evidence that Jews are over-represented in the cults." Philip D. Abramowitz of the JCRC Task Force on Missionaries and Cults, questions Bromley's numbers; perhaps the cults are declining but "the missionary and Hebrew-Christian groups are growing, and it is clear that the fastest expanding groups now are the Hebrew-Christian and messianic Hebrew groups."

The second feature article described the "exit" of Rachel from JFJ following counseling by psychologist Zalman Corlin of the Jewish Family Institute in Brooklyn. "She was indoctrinated to believe that her parents were under the influence of Satan and headed for eternal damnation," it was claimed.

AFTER THE MORMONS: A list of Christian missionary groups was provided by "JEWISH PRESS" (Brooklyn N.Y.). These are reportedly anxious to locate in Israel, such as "HOPE OF ISRAEL," from California, Apostolic World Conference, New Apostolic Church of Zurich, among others.

CHRISTIANS IN ISRAEL

UNITY: The traditional January Christian Unity Prayer Week will commence in Jerusalem with special services at St. George's Anglican Cathedral. Similar services for reconciliation and unity of the churches will be held throughout the week at St. Saviour's R.C. Church, at the Lutheran Evangelical Redeemer Church, at the Ethiopian Church, at St. Mark's Syrian and at the Greek Catholic Church. A Christian unity prayer service will be held at Mount Zion's Upper Room followed by silent prayer at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit (dates and times given for all events). JLM POST 19.1.86

"CHRISTIAN" ARAB ATHIEST: Anton Shamas is a Gentile without Gentile friends, an Arab living among Jews, a Christian among Muslims, an athiest among Christians, a writer in Hebrew. Born in 1950 in an Arab Galilean village, in his childhood he served daily as an altar boy at church. Now he visits the church as a secularist, but still loves to listen to the Christian liturgy, portions of Psalms sung in Arabic. (FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH ANTON SHAMAS by Yehudit Orien, YEDIOT AKHRONOT 21.3.86)

PROTESTANT CEMETERY: In a letter to the "POST," R.S. Merrillees, Australian Ambassador to Israel, complained of the state of the Protestant cemetery on the southern slopes of Mt. Zion, where many illustrious persons (Petrie, Starkey, Spafford, and British Commonwealth war dead) have been buried. He concludes: "It is to be hoped that those responsible will act promptly and effectively to safeguard this important burial ground in Jerusalem." (30.12.85) In reply, Bishop Samir Kafity, Chairman of the Mt. Zion Cemetery Board, wrote (16.1.86) that the board is "working on plans for the reconstruction of the border wall (and) will press for the complete restoration of the cemetery."

NES AMIM: CHRISTIAN COMMENT/Oikoumenikos, in a feature article headed "RETHINKING A RELATIONSHIP," reported on the German theologian, Petra Heldt, who recently joined the Galilean community. She is "profoundly committed to the theological task of rethinking the relationship between Christianity and Judaism." At her induction ceremony she remarked: "We weary ourselves trying to understand how exactly God gives redemption both to his people Israel and to the church of His Son Jesus Christ. . . (but) Paul already pondered how God would reconcile his irrevocable election of Israel with His promise of redemption to all. . . through the death and resurrection of His Son." In the end, she said, Paul allowed God's secret concerning the relationship between Jews and Gentiles to remain with God, giving his praise to the Holy One. (JLM POST 6 Mar 86)

COPTIC COLLEGE IN JERUSALEM: The construction of the Coptic College in Beit Hanina in north Jerusalem was discussed at a meeting in the Prime Minister's office. The Foreign Minister and Religious Affairs Minister took part in the wake of the urgent Egyptian request that the matter be resolved quickly. The Interior Minister, Rabbi Peretz, who fears additional mission activity in north Jerusalem following the approval of the Mormon university extension, "the idolatrous image in the Temple," has insisted that the project go through regular procedures. (HAMODIYA 2 Mar 86) The Israeli directors-General, meeting with their Egyptian counterparts today, are expected to inform them that final approval has been granted the Coptic Church to set up a college in Jerusalem, following the decision yesterday of the Jerusalem District Commission to authorize a construction permit for the project. (HAARETZ 19.3.86)

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