

MISSIONARIES

**TEL-AVIV:** Intensified missionary activity has been observed recently in Tel-Aviv and is causing much concern, and demands that strong action be taken. The missionaries, taking advantage of the summer season when thousands are on holiday, thrust innocent-looking propaganda into the hands of passersby. Some of them volunteer to explain the literature, energetically seeking to influence people to forsake Judaism and join the Christian religion. An older missionary woman this week tried to operate among young religious women on the separate women's beach in Tel-Aviv. She pestered several of the women and tried to offer them "baptism" for Jesus. When they tried to get rid of her, she offered them literature for reading at home. (22-26 JUL 87 ULTRA-ORTHODOX PRESS)

**JERUSALEM:** A missionary, looking like a tourist, strolled about the Western Wall of the Temple Mount plaza late in the evening with a lot of baggage. Only after he left the Wall area was it observed that he had left quantities of missionary material on the tables. A young rabbinical student, shocked to observe this, tore up the material and ran after the missionary, but he had made a swift getaway. It was afterwards noted that he had placed literature on the platforms where the Torah scrolls are laid. Several worshippers complained to the security watch about their laxity in permitting the man to enter with a large quantity of literature without having checked what he was carrying. (ULTRA-ORTHODOX PRESS 7 JUL 87; 15 JUL 87)

Two weeks later a missionary began distributing literature at the Wall and refused to heed the protests of passersby. A mobile police unit which reached the scene detained the man for questioning. The YAD L'AHIM anti-missionary society appeals to the public to be alert in the face of Mission agents who stop at nothing in their activities, even approaching religiously observant Jews. (HAMODIYA 23 JUL 87)

Christian missionaries have approached disabled veterans demonstrating near the prime minister's residence and offered to save their souls. (JERUSALEM POST 2 AUG 87)

**RANDOM INTERVIEWS ON BEN-YEHUDA MALL IN JERUSALEM:** (JERUSALEM TIMES 17 JUL 87)

Q. What is your opinion on missionaries; and have you ever been approached by a missionary?

- A. (1) Businessman: "I like missionaries — in Africa; but I've never been approached.
- (2) Insurance Man: "There are other places for them to work; let them go to Rome where there are plenty of non-believers; I haven't been approached."
- (3) "They should be banned like they are from any other sane country that has a bit of self-respect." (No occupation listed)
- (4) U.S. Tourists: "We think they have a purpose in this world, but not in Israel; but we haven't been approached."
- (5) Orthodox Student: "Even though they are sincere, their Christian love is only used to win over Jews to make them into something they are not. I have been approached."

**MESSIANIC JEWS:** The German-language newspaper ISRAEL NEWS (ISRAEL NACHRICHTEN) published in Tel-Aviv by an organization linked to the



Labour Party, produced an article in praise of the sect of Messianic Jews (See SELECTIONS No. 153, bottom page 1). The article even featured the address of Menahem Benhayim, "secretary of the Messianic Jews," for anyone interested in additional information. The YAD L'AHIM spokesman Aharon Kornfield dispatched a letter to the newspaper, protesting against the legitimizing of a Christian missionary organization, and enclosing a document, "a plan for the spiritual destruction of the Jewish people," composed in Lausanne in 1984 by the selfsame Benhayim and his friends. (HAMODIYA 17 JUL 87; SHEARIM 22 JUL 87)

**"INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH OF AN ETERNAL PEOPLE":** A full 1 1/4 page advertisement under this title appeared in HADASHOT 31 JUL 87, signed by Klaus Moshe Pulz, Chairman, from Ramat Hasharon. The institute represented itself as a group of Jewish citizens of the State of Israel "who take the liberty to discuss the existential problems of the Jewish people" in relation to the Bible and Yeshua the Messiah. The writer enters into various aspects of theology, eschatology, contemporary church positions, current events, the Jewish religious establishment in Israel, Messianic prophecies, etc.

**VICE-PRESIDENT LWF, ARAB CHRISTIAN WOMAN FROM JERUSALEM:** The new president of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the Bavarian Bishop of Hanselmann (Munich), formerly one of five vice-presidents of LWF, has been replaced as vice president by Aida Haddad of Jerusalem. The 48-year-old director of the library at the Arabic Birzeit University on the West Bank is the wife of Lutheran Bishop Daoud Haddad in Jerusalem. She said that she welcomed LWF efforts for a "just peace" between Palestinians and Israelis, and called on churches to counter-act "Israeli propaganda" stigmatizing all Palestinians as potential terrorists. Mrs. Haddad rejects all forms of violence, which only harms the Palestinian cause. (idea No. 6 JUL 87, 30 JUL, p. 12)

**ARAB-JEWISH YOUTH CONFERENCE:** The Young Mens Christian Association (YMCA) in Galilee hosted the 8th Conference for Arab and Jewish High School Youth in cooperation with the Arab-Jewish cooperative of Neve Shalom. The eight conferences have involved more than 300 Arab and Jewish youth, made possible in part by the support of the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly in the USA. (CHRISTIAN LIFE IN ISRAEL No. 24 Summer 87)

**INTERFAITH PRIZE TO ARAB CHRISTIAN JOURNALIST:** The Gabriel Stern Prize for promoting interfaith and intercommunal understanding was awarded to Atallah Mansour at a special ceremony in Jerusalem in March. A member of the editorial board of the Hebrew daily HAARETZ and the Arabic weekly el-SENNARA, he has introduced himself as a "Christian, Catholic, Greek Catholic, Israeli Arab," born in the Galilee village of Jish. (CLII p. 5)

**UCCI CONFERENCE:** CLII (page 3) carried a report of the 30th anniversary conference of the UCCI last November based on the report published in UCCI NEWS, Spring 1987. It referred to the remarks of Dr. Ray Register, UCCI chairman, Rev. Hani Shehadeh, deacon of the Evangelical Episcopal Church (with respect to Palestinian concerns), the English guest speaker Rev. Vic Jackopson, Canon Naim Ateek and Rev. Samir Kafity of the Evangelical Episcopal Church in the Middle East.

**ECUMENICAL FRATERNITY:** Rev. Petra Heldt has been elected executive secretary of the Ecumenical Theological Research Fraternity in Israel, following her departure from the Christian cooperative village of Nes Amim in northern Galilee. (CLII p. 5)

**BOOK BURNING:** In religious schools they burn and tear Bibles containing the New Testament in order to prevent the pupils from reading the "abominable" portion - and no one protests. On the other



hand, a Beer Sheva lad was ejected permanently from school for burning a Hebrew Bible to demonstrate that God does not exist. Like our father Abraham, the Beer Sheva student saw in the smashing of a symbol the proof that there was nothing behind the symbol. ... I hope that the lad will yet learn that as proof of the non-existence of God his act was a total failure. The way to correct that lad is not by curtailing his education, nor by compelling him to blindly respect what are called "the sanctities of the nation," but by educating him to investigate and inquire logically and scientifically. ... (AVNER SHAKED Tel-Aviv, DAVAR 26 APR 87)

**"THAT MAN" AGAIN:** The Ultra-Orthodox weekly EREV SHABAT published a bitter "exposé" about the Santana musical group imported for a fund-raising extravaganza on behalf of the Israeli Soldiers Welfare Fund. The group was charged with integrating Christian worship and a picture of "That Man" (Jesus) with their performances before some 50,000 Israelis. A spokesperson for the impresario who arranged for their appearances confirmed that they are a religious Christian group, and that the picture of Jesus was placed on the amplifier system regularly in their concerts. She compared it to a "good luck" charm or kissing the "mezuzah" (Jewish ritual object) by some Jewish athletes. She denied that the aromatic perfumes they spread on the stage had any religious significance. (8 MAY 87)

**"IN THE NAME OF GOD" (THE INQUISITION):** A feature article (1 1/2 pages) in KAWL HA'IR, the Jerusalem weekly (3 JUL 87) observed the 800th anniversary of the defeat of the Crusaders in the Holy Land and the 775th of the commencement of the Inquisition in Medieval Europe. With apologies to contemporary Dominicans, for whom he has the highest regard, the writer describes the historical and religious background and methods of the Dominican-initiated Inquisition, alongside photographs and drawings of torture implements displayed in a Toledo museum in Spain, "all in the name of the love of God." He underscores that the Inquisition, contrary to popular Jewish thinking, was primarily aimed at "deviant Christians" or heretics in the eyes of the church. Those Jews taken by the Inquisition were mainly Jews who had converted to Catholicism but were accused, as Christians, of heretical practices such as reverting to Jewish rites.

**PROTESTS AT WALDHEIM PAPAL VISIT:** The Israeli press noted the widespread protests at the visit with the Pope of the Austrian President Kurt Waldheim, who has been accused of participation in Nazi war crimes while serving with the German Army during World War Two. KAWL HA'IR (23 JUL 87) reported a denunciation by the International Conference of Christians and Jews of the Waldheim-Papal meeting.

**"JERUSALEM — CITY OF FAITHS":** "Kivunim" ("Directions") in its May 1987 issue published an eight-page article under this title by Israel Lippel, former Director-General of the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The article discussed the universality of Jerusalem from biblical times in Jewish sources (Solomon's dedicatory prayer at the Temple site, the prophecies of Isaiah and Zechariah, Jewish rabbinic legend); the character of its population (members of the "prophetic" as opposed to mystic religions of the Far East), and followed by analyses of the Jewish, Muslim and Christian constituents. Lippel notes the increasing polarization between Ultra-Orthodox and secular Jews, the growth of extremist elements in the Jewish community on both religious and nationalist grounds, the diminishing Christian population because of emigration from the time the British mandate ended in 1947.

There are at present 25 Christian communities or groups, of which ten have official recognition: Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Armenian-Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Maronites, Syrian-Orthodox, Armenian-Catholic, Syrian-Catholic, Nestorian Catholics and Anglicans. There are about 100 Christian worship sites ministering to some 14,000 local



Christians and multitudes of pilgrims from overseas (in 1985 over one million visitors). The impact of the churches upon one another and upon outsiders depends, according to Lippel, on their external political backing (e.g. the Vatican or a foreign power or embassy which provides such backing locally or from abroad).

The Christian churches here are also experiencing a growing Arabization; ironically, the Anglican Church, like the Lutheran Church, has appointed an Arab bishop, while its first bishop here was a Jew, the convert Alexander. Fundamentalist Protestant churches continue to engage in missionary activity whereas the older churches have abandoned this "sensitive area." Mention is also made of the pro-Israel Makuya sect from Japan, which is highly praised by the writer as "a movement of true righteous Gentiles" without any strings attached to their friendship for Israel. The need for vigilance in providing security to Christian religious groups from attacks by extremists on the Jewish and Arab side is noted.

In summary, Lippel concludes that "despite the difficulties, and the objective obstacles, there is in Jerusalem a co-existence of diverse religious communities" after 20 years of Israeli sovereignty over united Jerusalem. This is due to the moderation of the "constructive majority of Jerusalem's citizens - Jews, Christians and Muslims ... and it is in our interest to preserve the balance and respect for the rights of the various communities without being drawn into provocations and reactions from extremists on the Arab or Jewish side."

#### THE JEWISH DIASPORA

**JEW FOR JESUS:** Members of the Acre Youth Orchestra on a round of public appearances in the U.S.A. were rescued in the nick of time from a missionary trap set for them in Boston. It was learned by the Israeli Consulate in New York that home hospitality provided for the young musicians in Boston was being provided by members of the missionary organization JEW FOR JESUS. According to one version, some of them were only a short time in these homes when they realized that their hosts were leading them into conversations about Jesus. They complained and were transferred to student hostels on the Boston University campus.

Another version has it that the JFJ plot was exposed even before the home hospitality had been provided. While the response of the musicians themselves has not been available, New York sources told MAARIV that Claire Elbaz, who works with the Cultural Attache at the consulate, had sent out an SOS to several Jewish and Israeli institutions to obtain funds for thwarting the JFJ plot. Elbaz herself, however, stated in response that she knows nothing of any JFJ plot to host the Acre musicians.

Susan Perlman, spokeswoman for JFJ in San Francisco, stated that the organization has no "members" in the accepted sense, and if there had been a staff plan to host the musicians she would have known about it. She added that it was possible that another missionary organization might be using the name JFJ. Israeli sources have expressed astonishment that a missionary organization had obtained the orchestra schedule, which suggested great sophistication on their part. (MAARIV 4 AUG 87; also HAMODIA 7 AUG)

**JFJ SUMMER CAMPAIGN:** The summer evangelism campaign in New York City by JFJ sparked a counter-reaction by Orthodox Jewish militants, according to the JERUSALEM TIMES/JEWISH PRESS, in a series of lead articles and news items during July. The Orthodox counter-campaign was headed by Rabbi Yaakov Spivak, a well-known anti-mission activist. Rabbi Spivak claims that he has routed JFJ campaigners when he has debated with them or arranged for confrontation and they failed to show up. A call for volunteers to combat the JFJ campaign was sounded



by Julius Berman, chairman of the anti-mission Task Force of the JCRC of N.Y. "As in the past, but in greater numbers, our volunteers will stand side by side with JFJ with material designed by the Task Force to negate the broadsides handed out by JFJ," Berman stated.

Meanwhile, the JLM POST (29 JUL 87) reported "the first ever demonstration of its kind here, about 200 New York Jews gathered outside the Manhattan headquarters of JEWS FOR JESUS to denounce the missionary cult." The crowd cheered when Rabbi Moses Birnbaum of the N.Y. Board of Rabbis said that a JFJ supporter is "a convert to an alien tradition who has rebelled against our faith." Julius Berman of the JCRC said: "We cannot stand by while the uniqueness of our religion is challenged." Moshe Rosen, founder of the JFJ, told the POST: "Instead of dealing with real issues of intermarriage and disaffiliation, and the reality that the majority of Jews are not involved Jewishly, they vent their rage at the supposed missionary threat. Who do they think they will convince with such a demonstration?"

**ABMJ LOSES BATTLE:** After nearly three years of legal skirmishing with Jewish groups, the American Board of Missions to the Jews (ABMJ) has withdrawn its application to trademark a tour it operated known as SEE ISRAEL THROUGH JEWISH EYES. The trademarking was opposed in proceedings before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office by the National Jewish Commission on Law and Public Affairs, the Task force on Missionaries and Cults of the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) of N.Y. and the American Jewish Congress. They charged that the ABMJ was trying to foster efforts at converting Jews to Christianity through travel tour services to Israel, and that its slogan was deceptive and would induce Jews to join the tour thinking it was formed under Jewish auspices. (JERUSALEM TIMES/JEWISH PRESS 10 JUL 87)

**DETROIT MICHIGAN:** Efforts by evangelical Christians to convert Jews reached the parking lot of Adat Shalom Synagogue one Sabbath in late November. A booklet entitled TIME TO WAKE UP OUT OF SLEEP TO THE TRUTH was placed on car windshields during services. It is a rambling 20-page tract attempting to show how prophecy in the Torah was fulfilled in the New Testament. Distributed by Doyal Bradley, who said she was "born again" four years ago, the tract was a one-time thing, according to the local Rabbi. "My Lord tells me to go and witness," Bradley told the JEWISH NEWS emotionally; "we must come His way." (JEWISH NEWS, Detroit 12 DEC 86)

**SOVIET JEWS IN USA:** MAARIV (19 JUNE 87) and OUR ISRAEL (24 APR 87), the New York Hebrew-language newspaper, "expose" the extensive missionary enterprise in New York among Soviet emigrés, especially in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. Involved are Baptists and the Russian Orthodox Church. The latter has recently concluded the training of 22 young Soviet Jews for the Russian Orthodox priesthood in New York, while hundreds of other Soviet Jewish children benefit from church schools, cultural activities in Russian and English, summer camps, Jewish holiday celebrations, etc. The Jewish community leadership has called for massive efforts to counteract and "save" Soviet Jewry in America.

A. A. Gershoni in the Ultra-Orthodox SHEARIM (25 MAR 87) reports on contact with a Soviet "Jewish Christian" informant in Israel who discussed with him the debates within the movement led by the Orthodox priest Alexander Mann, himself Jewish by birth. Some are inclined to assimilation within the Russian culture, others (like Mann) want to retain a Jewish identity as well as win other Jews to their brand of Jewish Christianity. They are grappling with the problem of how to do this, especially the ones who have come to Israel as Jews.



**"JEWISH SOLDIERS FOR JESUS":** H. Zeveloff of YIDDISHE ZEITUNG (Tel-Aviv 19 JUN 87) describes the New York "born again" scene, especially its Jewish component, which includes Jeffrey Brodsky, an ex-Ultra-Orthodox, ex-Marines young Jewish activist, and Goldie Rotenberg, a 28-year old daughter of Holocaust survivors, who will only "marry a Jewish boy who speaks Yiddish, and will never permit her children to forget they are Jews," (but Jews who are "for Jesus," the reporter concludes wryly). The Orthodox ALGEMEINER JOURNAL of New York (MAR 87) reported a Hebrew-Christian meeting in an unnamed location, attended by 300 persons, with quotes by Ted Morgenstern, Moshe Rosen, Dr. Louis Goldberg.

**JEWISH ACTION LINE:** Rabbi Rubin R. Dubin, in his anti-mission/anti-cult feature (JERUSALEM TIMES/JEWISH PRESS 17 APR 87) responds to queries about "Messianic Synagogues" promoting "so-called Passover Seder" ceremonies (and proposes a concerted community information and hospitality campaign to counteract them); campus cult activities (recommends CULTISM ON CAMPUS, a book promoted by the American Family Foundation of Weston, MA); "Light of Israel Congregation" (a "false name used by a missionary group that tries to lure naive Jews on the road to Christianity"); and "The Bible Speaks" (led by Carl Stevens, "a very suspicious group ... being sued by ex-members").

**JEWS FOR JESUS IN ENGLAND:** JEWS FOR JESUS have renewed their activities in England, financed by evangelical movements in America to step up their campaign, according to Rabbi Benjamin Rabinowitz of the Edgware Synagogue. He termed a leaflet inserted in letterboxes about Passover "offensive and dangerous" because of its ostensibly Jewish character concealing its New Testament message. (JEWISH CHRONICLE 24 APR 87; also EREV SHABAT 17 JUL 87)

**"CONFESSIONS OF A JEWISH CULTBUSTER" (by Shea Hecht):** The JEWISH CHRONICLE (29 MAY 87) published a warm review by Rabbi Dr. Jonathan Sacks about this book by a Lubavitcher "cultbuster" who does not exclude kidnapping of cult members. "Is deprogramming not as bad as the brainwashing it counters, and an unwarrantable intrusion into the lives of cult members?" the reviewer asks. Rabbi Hecht, however, regards deprogramming as "pidyon shvuyim" (redeeming the captives), giving people back their capacity to act freely and think critically.

**ORTHODOX JEWS AND INTERFAITH:** Orthodox Jews should be more involved in Jewish-Christian relations, according to participants in a seminar convened by the British Chief Rabbi Sir Immanuel Jakobovits, under the auspices of the Council of Christians and Jews. Christian speakers stressed that missionary activity was not supported by responsible church leaders, but the church had no power to stop it. "The more that members of both our communities enter into dialogue, the more they will help marginalise these evangelical groups," one speaker stated. Rabbis from all over Britain attended the seminar, and Christian participants included Lord Coggan, former Archbishop of Canterbury. (JEWISH CHRONICLE 26 JUN 87)

\*\*\*END TRANSCRIPT\*\*\*

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