

**FILE CLOSED IN ALLEGED MISSION BRIBERY CASE:** A police file opened at the instigation of anti-mission activists against David and Lisa Loden of the Messianic congregation "Asaf" in Netanya, for allegedly bribing Jews to convert to Christianity, in violation of the "Mission Law" which forbids the giving of any material benefit to another for the purpose of inducing that person to change religions, has been closed by the police on the instructions of the Attorney-General of Israel.

The case began 1 1/2 years ago when rabbis Eliezer Sorozkin and Moshe Lachover, heads of the anti-mission society YAD L'AHIM in Netanya, filed a complaint with the police and presented incriminating documents. At a news conference they organized, the rabbis charged that David Loden, who also heads the Messianic choir SINGERS OF PRAISE, and his wife, (whose Jewish origins are quite dubious) emigrated from the USA to Israel some 15 years ago. They succeeded in infiltrating an institution for disabled youth in Netanya, baptizing the invalid Rosa Hershkowitz; and through the prison guard and medic Rami Danieli, the prisoner Gabi Amos was brought into the Messianic congregation.

Rabbi Lipschitz, chairman of YAD L'AHIM, has alerted Knesset members and public figures to the implications of the closure of the file against the Lodens. "This is the last nail in the coffin of the Mission Law, which will never be implemented," he stated. At the same time, the legal adviser of YAD L'AHIM, attorney Eliyahu Zavin, forwarded an appeal to the Attorney General against his decision. The Attorney General has based his decision on the claim that there was no criminal guilt involved in the charges against the Lodens.

The story, which was carried in Jewish Orthodox papers, also carried photographs of David Loden and a check in the amount of NIS 80 (approx. USD 50) issued by the Messianic congregation to an unnamed person, which was alleged to be the bribe. One report also carried a prayer allegedly offered at the Asaf congregation following the closing of the file: "In the name of our Lord, we ask you to bless the government attorneys who have helped us to drive out the evil and cruel enemy YAD L'AHIM, the messenger of Satan." (5 - 9 May '88)

**WALL POSTERS:** Posters printed in blood-red letters in Jerusalem have warned residents against taking home copies of a missionary book called TWO MEN FROM EDEN, which has flooded Jerusalem recently. Judy Perlman, office manager of YAD L'AHIM in Jerusalem, claims it is the largest circulation of missionary literature she recalls in five years that she has worked with the organization. "Since the book is used for missionary purposes, there is no prohibition against burning it," she said; "and the same thing applied to New Testaments attached to the Bible" (even though they include God's name and numerous biblical verses). (IN JERUSALEM, JLM POST SUPPLEMENT 22 APR 88.) See also SELECTIONS No. 161, pages 3-4, "THE MISSION."

**MESSIANIC JEWISH TRACTS AT HEBREW UNIVERSITY:** Yaakov Damkane, a "Messianic Jew" who lives in Jaffa, has recently flooded letter-boxes in the student dorms of Jerusalem's Hebrew University with lavish blue tracts of the "Messianic Jews." If until now, the missionary scheme to promulgate their teaching in Tel-Aviv, has failed, thanks to public alertness, they have now invaded Jerusalem in a novel way.

Damkane was released from military service and emigrated to the U.S., where he became a "Messianic Jew" and returned to Israel. At age 30 he approached the I.D.F. and asked that his military profile be raised so that he might now serve, declaring that his faith requires that he

be honest in the presence of "That Man" (Jesus), and he is obliged to do his service, but the examining committee, for understandable reasons, rejected his request.

Meanwhile, a group of Orthodox Jewish students is about to appeal to the rector of the university with the demand that there be constant supervision of the grounds to prevent further missionary activity in the dorms and on campus. (HAMODIYA 27 APR; SHEARIM 4 MAY 88)

**BUS STATION EVANGELISM:** Missionaries and their agents are distributing missionary material and seeking to trap souls in many public places, such as the central bus station in Tel-Aviv, especially the exit point of No. 222 line to the Lod airport, where many tourists and visitors are found. This was recently reported by the "Activists (Pe'ilim) of the United States," whose leaders have warned against diverse missionary operations in the form of book and tract distribution, the reading of which involves grave risks, especially for young people. These publications contain drawings and pictures to catch the eye of the traveler and interest him in the material before he realizes what is behind it. Several travelers on this bus line were shocked to see the missionaries at "work" and called for forceful action to prevent the continuation of their efforts to trap innocent souls in their net. (HAMODIYA 4 MAY; YETAID NE'EMAN 5 MAY 88)

**"THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE":** (A) The work of the missionaries in Israel is being done by the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs, judging from the multimedia pageant, at the centre of which is the Christian version of the deeds of "That Man" J-s-u; and all of this under the name of "The Israeli Experience." Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek was very enthusiastic about this queer experience, which is aimed not only at tourists but also at Israelis. Knowledgeable people need not be surprised, since this is typical of the secularist conception that everything in Israel may be called "Israeli." The question is: Why was it necessary to locate the Christian Experience at the centre of the "Israeli Experience"? It could have been called the Christian Experience, and no one would have complained. (THE ULTRA-ORTHODOX CAMP, JLM: 27 APR 88)

(B) It would be difficult to define the precise moment of climax in the pageant "THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE," which will open at the YMCA on 25 MAY 88, perhaps because it is entirely made up of climactic moments. The announcer, with a voice of sacred drama, describes the measured steps of Jesus throughout the Land of Israel, his heart filled to overflowing with faith and thanksgiving to God, resisting human wolves who seek to persuade him to convert stones into bread after a fast of thirty (sic.) days. "Man does not live by bread alone," he exclaims, and hurries off to revive sick Lazarus who has died.

The clear purpose of the pageant is to attract the 200,000 pilgrims who visit Israel each year, which it almost certainly will do. Composed of 3,200 radiant slides, with the script written by five leading clergymen, it blends in well with the atmosphere of miracle and wonder ... beautiful natural landscapes and restful music, to the sound of which Jesus expands his circle of followers and washes the feet of His disciples, a theme repeated in several variations as a symbol of His teaching for generations to come.

In order to avoid any suspicion of missionary intent, the announcer refers to the three monotheistic religions in the Land, and pictures of pious Muslims and Jews are shown. The pageant was produced by Schein Productions and funded by Deal Company at a cost of a half-million dollars by the millionaire Leon Teman, but will be shown at a cost of five shekels per person. (Yotham Benziman, KAWL HA'IR 13 MAY 88)

**STRONG MAN MISSIONARY?** A strong man act at the Jerusalem Hilton Hotel is a front for a missionary meeting, officials of YAD L'AHIM, the anti-mission organization, have charged. Advertisements offer free entry to an exhibition of "JOHN JACOBS & POWER". (JERUSALEM POST 12 MAY 88)

**"MESSIANIC JEWS" COMING:** An International Conference of Messianic Jews is to take place during Shavuot (Hebrew Pentecost) next week. Unlike JEWS FOR JESUS, who in general join Christian churches, the Messianic Jews often form their own congregations. The High Court of Justice is considering the petition of two Messianic Jews from Zimbabwe for residence rights under the Law of Return. According to conference press officer David Stern, some 400 are expected from the U.S. and a like number from Israel, including Gentiles and non-Messianic Jews. The conference will feature traditional Sabbath and holiday services and dinner, as well as a 14-day tour.

Ze'ev Stieglits of the anti-mission YAD L'AHIM said that volunteers are ready to meet the participants wherever they go to tell them that missionary activity is not welcome, and they will warn the public who the visitors are. (JLM POST 11 MAY 88)

#### CHRISTIANS IN ISRAEL

**THE AWAD FAMILY:** The Jerusalem weekly KAWL HA'IR (13 MAY 88) carried a two-page feature article with photographs about the Palestinian-American activist Mubarak Awad, his American Quaker wife, his brother Bishara (director of Bethlehem Bible College) and Jewish-Israeli supporters in Mubarak Awad's fight against deportation on grounds of illegal residence.

At 48, Bishara is the oldest son in the family, orphaned during the Israeli War of Independence, and raised by a devout Christian mother, "who always urged us to seek the presence of God and not to seek vengeance, which is why Mubarak is close to God in his own way, the way of non-violence, and why I am close to Him in my own way." Bishara has extensive ties with Israelis in the peace camp ("PEACE NOW"), and with liberal rabbis, while friends from the JEWS FOR JESUS organization meet with him for common prayer. Bishara asserts that both he and his brother advocate non-violence, that almost everything he has he owes to the Hebrew Bible and his faith in Jesus, but Mubarak owes much to intellectual ideologies of non-violence, while still much influenced by the Christian spirit. Meanwhile, the appeal against the deportation order is being weighed by the Israeli High Court.

**CHURCH OF SCOTLAND:** The District Committee for Planning and Construction in Jerusalem has rejected the plans for expanding the Scottish Church building by approximately 150 sq. meters on the grounds that it would impair its appearance. Built during the British Mandate, the church building is considered one of the most beautiful in Jerusalem. (KAWL HA IR 6 MAY 88)

**JEWISH QUARTER:** Martha Rothmeyer left Holland in 1969 with her mother, sister and her brother, while her father and three other brothers remained in Holland. "I felt unable to belong to any organization; the various churches have distorted original Christianity and added false interpretations. I do not believe in the Holy Trinity. There is only one true religion, that of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament," she declares.

She opposes conventional Christianity and "hates" the missionaries even more than her Orthodox Jewish neighbours who accuse her of acting as a missionary when she leads groups at archaeological sites in the area. "These missionaries are even worse than the Arabs," says David Menashe, who signed a petition along with dozens of residents of the Jewish Quarter requesting her eviction from the Quarter. "The Arabs

fight the "monopoly" of the "anti-humanist, anti-Gentile" Orthodox nationalists in religious programming in Israel.

**AMERICAN CHRISTIAN SUPPORTERS:** In a 17-page monograph published in GESHER ("BRIDGE") Tel-Aviv (SPRING 88), Professor Moshe Davis presents testimonies of American Christians who supported the Jewish return to the Holy Land both morally and practically "out of a profound Christian faith." He provides quotations from the writings of each person, beginning with William Blackstone (author of JESUS IS COMING and a Zionist before Herzl); Rev. Edwin Wallace, Presbyterian minister and U.S. Consul in Jerusalem who was intimately involved with the Jewish community of late 19th century Jerusalem and protected them from Turkish misrule; the pioneer biblical archaeologist Wm. F. Albright; Unitarian minister John Holmes and environmentalist Walter Lowdermilk.

**SECTARIANS:**

**MORMONS:** (A) The Ultra-Orthodox weekly EREV SHABAT reported that the Mormons are panic-stricken over the mysterious breakage of expensive windows in their new university campus which allegedly caused damage of US\$ 60,000, and they are looking to sell the property. Eliezer Rahat, project manager, denies any panic or any major loss, and claims that the breakage is not unusual in new buildings. "The Ultra-Orthodox are idolaters seeking the hand of God to strike the Mormons," Rahat protested. (KAWL HA'IR 20 APR 88)

(B) Orthodox Jews continued to protest the final approval of the leasing of the property on Mt. Scopus in Jerusalem to the Brigham Young University extension by a cabinet vote. The Yad L'Ahim anti-mission organization called on Orthodox Jewish members of the government to resign in protest. Although the lease contains a provision forbidding Mormon missionary activity, the organization spokesman told a radio interviewer: "The undertaking isn't worth anything, and experience will prove that they will missionize as much as they wish." (RADIO ABSTRACT 8 MAY 88)

**THE RISE AND FALL OF IR OVOT:** The Ultra-Orthodox weekly EREV SHABAT (15 APR 88) published a full two-page expose' of Simha Pearlmutter, the founder of the "Messianic" settlement Ir Ovot in the Negev. Originally arriving from the U.S. in 1966 as a Messianic Jewish group, Pearlmutter converted the settlement into an Ultra-Orthodox enclave, gaining extensive material and moral support from the Ultra-Orthodox community. When his first wife Judith left him, she told the rabbinical court he was still a believer in Jesus, and she asked for an immediate divorce. Extensive investigation was carried on, secretly and openly, and the Ultra Orthodox community was finally convinced that he was an "apostate" and an imposter, and ordered all the Orthodox believers out of the settlement, declaring it off limits and Pearlmutter excommunicate.

Pearlmutter has since declared himself openly as a follower of Yeshua. His main support is from outside the country from Christian sources (such as Jordan College in Michigan), although neighbouring settlers claim he earns money by agricultural deals with disreputable elements in Israel.

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

16 May 1988/mb

FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS WRITE TO:  
UCCI/SELECTIONS  
POB 116, JERUSALEM 91000  
ISRAEL.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:  
\$25 PER YEAR (OUTSIDE ISRAEL)  
\$18 PER YEAR (INSIDE ISRAEL)

NOTE: NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT UCCI PERMISSION.