

**CONVICTION OF CHURCH ARSONIST:** An activist in the "Kach" movement (led by Meir Kahane), Noam Federman, 19, was convicted in the Jerusalem District Court, on the basis of his confession, of arson at St. Paul's church in Jerusalem, and of causing damage to Arab automobiles in various areas. Federman was also convicted of writing slanderous graffiti against Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek: "Traitor," "Kahane will take care of you," "Teddy is an Arab," etc.; as well as of writing on TV House: "TV PLO OUT," and similar graffiti on the door of the PEACE NOW spokesman Amiram Goldblum.

District Court Judge Dr. Zvi Cohen convicted Federman on the basis of a plea bargain arranged between the prosecutor and the advocate Michael Abiraam, which involved pleading guilty to two counts of attempted arson at churches and acquittal on the third count, and also acquittal of the charge of damaging Arab-driven vehicles in the vicinity of the New Gate. The attorney declared his intention to seek Federman's release on bail until sentence is passed in September. (MAARIV 8 JUL 88)

**ANTI-MISSION ACTIVIST TO BE ARRESTED:** Rami Feller, head of the ultra-orthodox (anti-mission) organization YAD L'AHIM will be arrested by Israeli police upon his return to Israel. Feller, age 33, who is now abroad, is suspected of heading up a network smuggling illegal wireless phones into Israel. Three other suspects are already in detention for alleged distribution and installation of the phones. (HADASHOT 14.7.88) A feature article by Zeev Yefet in HAARETZ (16.7.88) gave full details about the illegal enterprise, which has led to disturbances in the Israeli security communications system.

#### JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

**"THE PRIVATE UPRISING OF THE CHRISTIANS":** Under this heading the YEDIOT AHRONOT weekend supplement JERUSALEM published an article by Haled Abu-Tuama about West Bank Christians, following the death of the first victim of the "intafada" among the Christian communities. Excerpts follow:

Among Christians in the territories there is an increasing desire to prove their patriotism because they are a minority among the total Arab population. This is the opinion of Palestinian circles in the West Bank. The "intifada" claimed this week its first Christian victim in a clash between security forces and rioters, a young man of 16, Ibrahim Asan Aranki of Kfar Taibe. The secret command of the uprising had appealed to Christians, beginning with Leaflet No. 5, to demonstrate on Sundays after church services. Since that time there has been a significant increase in disturbances, especially on Sundays, in Christian population centres in East Jerusalem, Ramallah, Beit Sahur, Bethlehem and Beit Jallah.

Christian community leaders, however, have categorically denied that the increasing involvement of Christians in the uprising stems from their desire to prove their loyalty to the Moslem majority. They stressed the purely national character of the activities, as members of the Palestinian people. "We are not fighting for smoothing over relations with the Moslems," said one Christian clergyman.

About two weeks ago 150 merchants went on a hunger strike in the local church of Beit Jallah against tax collection. Christians in the past suspected of collaboration with Israel have also begun to "repent", and one such incident involved a ceremony of "repentance" by a family involved with the Village Leagues (promoted by Israeli authorities), after which he was warmly blessed by the priest.

"We are all of us, Christians and Moslems, members of one people, and there is no discrimination between the two communities, but on the contrary full cooperation in all areas," declared Jaques Hazmo, a Christian and owner of the most widely circulated weekly in the territories. Many Christians were arrested before the uprising, and

Israeli authorities make no distinction between them and the non-Christians. He spelled out the names of members of the Christian community who are among Palestinian leaders locally and in the P.L.O.

**THE CROSS:** "JERUSALEM OF LIGHT" is the creation of an Israeli-Jewish municipality, organized for the honour of Jerusalem, which, despite the Vatican's wishes, has been liberated from our enemies. How ironic that an illuminated cross, the symbol of the Vatican which has not yet recognized the State of Israel, and which certainly does not recognize our sovereignty in Jerusalem, waves on high...a cross a part of our celebration! What does this mean to us? Thousands of Jews have been murdered throughout history in the name of that cross, in the crusades, in the blood libels. Do we place such a symbol "as our chiefest joy"? The time has come for us to stop flattering our murderers and to remember a little of our history. Shlomo & Ida Crandall, Jerusalem (MAARIV 8 JUN 88)

**THE NEW TESTAMENT:** Recently I was in a book store in Netanya, and its owner told me that a woman had come in to buy the New Testament. When the owner expressed surprise, she replied: "I don't want to buy it, but the teacher has required my son and all the pupils in his class to have one." Really, Minister of Education, Mr. Navon! First the Palestinian Covenant is required reading, and now the New Testament is required? (HATSOFEH 15.6.88) Azarya Alexander.

**INTERFAITH:** The ultra-orthodox weekly YATAID NE'EMAN (20.5.88) published a feature article by Y. Weiss about awards given by the Ministry of Religious Affairs for promoting ties between Christianity and the State of Israel, as well as between other religious communities.

"Antoine Shaheen of Nazareth won an award for his work in strengthening and cementing ties of Christian religious orders and the State! The Minister of Religious Affairs grants awards to those who continue the vision of Herzl who also desired strong ties with Christian orders. Incidentally, an article recently published in the newspaper HATSOFEH (religious Zionist) under the heading "TO JUSTIFY THE RIGHTEOUS", concluded that in Herzl's writings there is no heresy. If the desire to organize a massive campaign of apostasy, observing pagan Christian festivals, and the like, which are mentioned in Herzl's diaries, are not to be defined as "heresy," who are we to complain about the disciple continuing in this tradition, and awarding a prize to those who encourage ties between Christianity and the State?"

**RELIGIOUS CO-EXISTENCE:** A symposium concerning religion as an educational factor for co-existence was the subject at the Truman Institute on Mt. Scopus in connection with awards for students who submitted studies on Jewish-Arab relations. Orthodox Rabbi David Shalush, Sheikh Abdallah Darwish, and Fr. Marcel Dubois, were the speakers.

Rabbi Shalush (who was under attack by the ultra-orthodox weekly YOM HASHISHI for taking part) called for a common front against Darwinism, the successor to that ancient paganism which Christianity & Islam had helped uproot.

Sheikh Darwish stressed the need for peace and justice in the land. "I never have denied the legitimate rights of the Jewish people, but I call upon the Jews to recognize the rights of others," he stated. He called on religious Jews to demonstrate against mass deportation of Arabs and against racism.

Fr. Dubois lamented the misuse of faith, which in itself unites mankind; but tradition, culture, laws and social practice divide mankind. He believes that ultimately pure, self-confident faith, which also values the faith of others, will prevail. (KAWL HA'IR 17.6.88 Shahar Ilan)

**JOHN DEMANJUK:** An article by police investigators of John Demanjuk, convicted by an Israeli court of being "Ivan the Terrible" during the Holocaust of World War Two, reveals that he was both antisemitic and devout. "Many of the conversations with him were on religious matters, on his own initiative, and police investigators were impressed that he was very religious, or at least tried to create such an impression, as if he were beginning a process of repentance. He read very much from the New Testament and liked to compare himself to Jesus who was crucified by the Jews, and read often those portions relating to the crucifixion of Jesus. (HAARETZ 8 JUL 88)

**"BELIEVERS IN JESUS:"** Under this heading, "IN JERUSALEM," the weekly Jerusalem supplement of the JERUSALEM POST (17.6.88) published a feature article by Herb Keinon about Messianic Jews and their opponents. Those quoted were David Stern and Joseph Shulam of "Netivya" congregation in Jerusalem, Victor Smadja of the Messianic Assembly, J'lm, Reform Rabbi Tuvia Ben-Horin, and "Ze'ev" of YAD L'AHIM. Excerpts follow:

**DAVID STERN:** He says he keeps kosher and has many Jewish ceremonial objects in his home, prays in Hebrew at the Netivya congregation which has a Tora scroll. A veteran of JEWS FOR JESUS campaigns, he stresses that Israeli Messianic Jewish congregations are not affiliated with J.F.J.

**JOSEPH SHULAM:** "The J.F.J. have bought into Evangelical garbage...speaking in tongues, faith healing..." Bulgarian-born, in Israel since age 2, he became converted in the early 1960s after reading the New Testament in high school.

**VICTOR SMADJA:** Came to Israel from Tunis. In reply to off-the-record remarks by Netivya members that the Messianic Assembly doesn't stress its Jewish links enough, he stated that they are equally Jewish, and observe the Jewish festivals rather than Christmas and Easter, but give the Jewish festivals messianic overtones.

**"ZE'EV" (YAD L'AHIM):** "One Jew who believes in Jesus can't be more 'Jewish' than another Jew who believes in Jesus." He compares Messianic Jews to someone who stabs his mother and then claims to love her.

**TUVIA BEN-HORIN (REFORM RABBI):** "Historically, any time Jews have pinned their Messianic hopes on any particular individual - the false Messiahs - they have found themselves outside the borders of Judaism. By Jewish religious law they may still be Jews, but surely not honorable Jews." He believes that those in Israel have the right to congregate, but the Jewish establishment should study what is lacking in Judaism today that sends Jews into the arms of Christianity. "I'm afraid that what these people find in the Messianic Jewish community is a love and concern they haven't found in Judaism," he says.

**CUSTODY FIGHT IN HAIFA:** The Haifa rabbinic court has ruled in a case before it that it is better to deliver the children into the hands of foster parents than into the care of their parents. The case involves a Jewish mother who has been proved to have joined a Messianic sect. The husband in the case, an invalid without legs, has sued for divorce on the grounds that his wife belongs to the church of the Messianics, which she regularly visits, and he demands custody of the children in order that they may remain Jews and receive a religious education. The mother claims that he cannot care for them because of his disability.

When the mother was asked by the rabbis if she wanted her children to accept her new faith, she replied: "Not now." The rabbinic judges ruled that, although she would not rear them as Christians now, in the future she intended to do so. They also noted: "When she spoke to us

about Christianity, her words were with enthusiasm and devotion bordering on ecstasy."

They therefore ruled that the children should be given into the hands of an Orthodox Jewish foster family: "We live in the State of the Jews, and there is a great danger that the mother of the children, who is very devoted to Christianity, will convert them. It is an elementary right in the Jewish State for a citizen to receive assistance from the court." They stated that it would be cruel punishment to the father that, because of his disabled condition, he should be forced to have his children in the hands of a woman who has converted to Christianity. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 12 JUL 88)

#### **"THE MISSION"**

**TARGET: JERUSALEM RABBIS:** Dread, anger and shock has taken hold of Jerusalem rabbis and the ultra-orthodox community. Is someone playing a joke, or is a missionary trying to convert them from Judaism, Heaven forbid? Tens of books in English from a missionary institution have reached the rabbis at their personal addresses, among them great Torah sages and well-known ultra-orthodox rabbis. The books were delivered by letter carriers. When the parcels were opened, the rabbis were shocked to discover the missionary material of the well-known TV preacher, J.R. Church from Oklahoma, U.S.A. The book is entitled "HIDDEN PROPHECIES IN THE PSALMS", contains 400 pages in colourful binding, and enclosed with it is an offer of a subscription to a magazine on prophecy research for USD 18, including a free book entitled "ARMANDA SYMPTOM". (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 23.6.88 Yitzhak Rabinia) The rabbis who received "HIDDEN PROPHECIES" have alerted YAD L'AHIM activists, who have piled up dozens of copies of the uninvited books, and are expecting further "attacks" on rabbis in other towns. A spokesman for the organization proposes that the books be refused by addressees, which will cause them to be returned to their sender. (VARIOUS PAPERS 23.6.88 - 1 JUL 88)

**MISSIONARY BOOKS IN IDF LIBRARY:** A few days before Defence Minister Rabin announced that the Israel Defense Force would be closed to "religious influence", YAD L'AHIM spokesman Aharon Kornfeld on reserve duty discovered, to his surprise, missionary literature in boxes belonging to the chief educational officer of the IDF, designed to help soldiers fill their leisure time. The books were "confiscated" and sent to the Chief Rabbi of the IDF, with a request to "neutralize" the army first of all from alien influences. (SHEARIM 22.6.88)

**MISSIONARY BRIBE OFFER ALLEGED:** "People who have proposed that I convert to Christianity have come to me, in exchange for financial assistance to relieve my distress; I have no choice, and will be forced to accept their offer. I can't starve to death with my two children. How much can I ask charity from neighbours in order to have bread in the house?" With tears in her eyes, Claudine Ben-Baron, 47, and mother of two, from Arad, protested. Her children, aged 13 and 18, (the older is ill) are expecting eviction from their flat at any moment, having failed to pay their rent during the past eight months. The family, it seems, will find itself out on the street. (YEDIOT AKHRONOT 14.7.88 By Tamar Treblisi)

**CHRISTCHURCH MISSIONARIES:** A group calling itself "COMMITTEE FOR THE SANCTITY OF JERUSALEM" has written an open letter to the Minister of Religious Affairs to exercise his authority immediately in order to stop the open missionary activity conducted, on their own testimony, by Christchurch people opposite the Tower of David where they recently opened a missionary literature and gift shop. The letter noted that the church people had been defamed by Daniel Rossing, the head of the Christian department of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, as "clearly missionary." The letter closes with a request for the immediate closure of the mission station operating under the guise of "Church of the Messiah" (Christchurch). (HAMODIYA 16.6.88)

In the June 1988 issue of SHALOM Magazine, the organ of the "Church Among the Jews" (sic.), which is under the patronage of the Anglican Church, an article headed "CHRISTCHURCH IN JERUSALEM" describes the activities of the movement among the Jewish population of Jerusalem. It notes that during the past year over 7,000 Jewish visitors to the church heard sermons and took part in religious rites, as well as on Sundays when many believers attend English-language services. The writer, Alfred Sawyer, rector of the Messianic Church in Jerusalem, notes that the movement has begun operating a new program - SHORESII - (ROOTS), which is designed to teach church visitors about the roots of the Jewish people and its belief.

The article would probably not have attracted much attention except for the photographs related to it, showing a group of soldiers with their unit identity visible, touring the church, and another photo showing dozens of personal weapons hanging in the church. The caption reads: "Last year over 7,000 Jews visited Christchurch, and everyone took part in a religious rite." Also on the cover is a drawing of an IDF soldier girl in uniform dancing with other Jewish converts.

Sylvia Suster, after reading the article, was angered over the attempt to link IDF soldiers to missionary activity and wrote a sharp letter to the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, expressing doubt about the data suggesting that multitudes of Jews have converted. She also protested the anti-Israeli and pro-Palestinian expressions in the article, and sent the material to the IDF spokesman.

The spokesman for the Christian movement in Israel refused to make any comment since the rector, Alfred Sawyer, is on holiday. On the other hand, the IDF spokesman protested against the attempt to link IDF soldiers to any missionary activity. "The soldiers visited the church as part of their educational tours of Israel, which deal with the modernization of 19th century Jerusalem. When the church began last December to insist that visitors hear their guides (rather than IDF guides), the visits by soldiers to the church were stopped," he said. (MAARIV 8 JUL 88)

Several other ultra-orthodox newspapers also published reports based on the SHALOM magazine story about Christchurch. Several of the writers attacked the chief educational officer of the IDF, Brigadier Nehemiah Dagan, who is held responsible for the church visits.

**INTERVIEW:** A Question & Answer Section in the ultra-orthodox weekly YATAID NEEMAN (17.7.88) between a columnist and an anti-mission leader in YAD L'AHIM; excerpts follow:

- Q What prompts a Jew to attend a church and listen to Christian propaganda?
- A Two reasons: First, the historical and educational factor channeled through institutions which organize tours and courses around Christian sites, where a Christian guide presents the Christian perspective to the groups. Secondly, the spiritual and social crisis which has overtaken secular society and leads them to search for ways to fill a spiritual vacuum, with one way being the Jewish penitents movement, and on the other hand, they may fall as ripe fruit into the hands of the missionaries.
- Q How many missionaries are active in Israel?
- A According to our data, about 3,000 missionaries who lead to the conversion of several hundreds of Jews each year.
- Q What does the law say about this activity?

now active in the sects and missionary activity into the way of truth and perfect repentance.

**MISSIONARY KEY CHAINS:** The public is being warned against the use of innocent-looking key chains which on one side contain the Hebrew traveler's prayer and on the other a clearly Christian prayer in English. The chains were found in various Bnei Brak stores. They thought the English was merely a translation of the Hebrew prayer. When they discovered it was a portion from the New Testament ("The Lord's Prayer"), they expressed disgust and anger over the craftiness of the missionary agents. (SHEARIM/ULTRA-ORTHODOX CAMP) 6.6.88/6.7.88

**MISSION - TIBERIAS:** A pamphlet received by many residents of Kiryat Moshe in Tiberias has shocked people. The pamphlet tells the story of a son who fled from his home, and contains an appeal to the reader, as follows: "Dear Reader, This story is taken from the New Testament. Perhaps you have fled from home to seek your independence... Actually, every one is fleeing from our heavenly father, as is written in Isaiah 53:6 (quoted). God, our heavenly father loves you and awaits your return. If you want to know more about God's love, please fill out the enclosed form..." No one knows who distributed the pamphlets. (YEDIOT HAGALIL UPPER NAZARETH) 15.4.88

**MISSIONARY SECT IN TABA:** Members of a missionary sect living in tents and looking like "beatniks" are under the absolute control of their authoritarian leaders. The existence of the sect in Taba was discovered recently when a young English woman fell into the sectarian net, which brought her parents to Israel to rescue her, and they succeeded in returning her to England.

The sect was founded by an American citizen who left the U.S. following pressures on the sect and started working in Tananarive Island. When they were exposed there, they decided to settle in Sinai, where they were arrested by the Egyptian authorities and deposited over the border into Israeli hands at Taba, where they have been mingling with the many "beatniks" in the area. Neither the Egyptian consulate in Eilat, the local police, nor the mayor are aware of the sect. (EREV EREV IN ELLAT 23.6.88)

**EMMA BERGER SECT:** Shlomo Ariav, a veteran of the Revisionist (right-wing) movement has been involved in a public campaign to restrict purchase of land by the missionary Emma Berger sect in the Zichron Yaakov area. He tries to persuade landowners, government officials and municipal councils to join him. (HAYARDEN 20.6.88)

**DIASPORA NEWS:**

**LONDON:** The Council of Christians & Jews is expected to adopt a higher profile with the appointment of Canon Jim Richardson as its executive director. "We need to be rather sharper and to attract young people," he told the JEWISH CHRONICLE. He wants to encourage young Christians to visit Israel, to meet the people to and study there. The Gospel, he contends, should be spread among people of no faith. "To go to people of other faiths is an impertinence," he stated, "and we shall condemn it whenever we find it." (JEWISH CHRONICLE 27.5.88) Meanwhile, the Israeli Hebrew daily HADASHOT (13.7.88), reported from London that the Anglican Church will forbid its clergy to convert Jews, and will demand that they pray that Jews hold on to their faith, according to Oxford Bishop Richard Harris, speaking at a Holocaust Conference.

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

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