

MaozNews No. 35

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Our goal is to provide readers with an overview of realities in and with regard to Israel, with particular reference to the Gospel.

Readers will view those portions of MaozNews in which they have interest.

To that end, we seek to diversify.

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Semi-Governmental Anti-Christian Activity in Israel

Provided to the public by Donna Diorio, Dallas Texas www.israelprayer.com

This document was composed by the US Embassy in Israel and submitted to the Secretary of State. It was to remain classified until 2013, but was released after a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for documents related to Yad L'Achim activities against believers in Israel. Yad Le'Achim is a semi-governmental organisation, with connections to prominent politicians in Israel. A significant portion of its annual budget is funded by the "Special Tasks Department" of the Ministry of Interior, with which it works in close tandem.

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SUBJECT: Bible burning highlights growing anti-missionary sentiment in ISRAEL

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: The May 15 mass public burning of New Testaments in the Tel Aviv suburb of Or Yehuda highlights a growing trend toward anti-missionary incitement in Jewish neighbourhoods throughout Israel. Other notable incidents include the October firebombing of a Jerusalem church shared by Baptists and Messianic Jews (i.e. Jews who believe Jesus was the Messiah) and the March 20 bombing of a Messianic Jewish home in the West Bank settlement of Ariel, in which a 15-year old boy was gravely wounded. Contacts in Messianic and Evangelical Christian congregations throughout Israel describe a worsening situation and allege complicity or complacency on the part of police, local government and the Interior Ministry. For their part, anti-missionary groups such as the ultra-Orthodox Yad L'Achim appear more determined than ever to escalate their campaign against Christian and Messianic congregations that they see as "cults" determined to "steal Jewish souls." END SUMMARY

Background

United States Department of State, Review Authority: Sharon E. Ahmad

Date/Case ID: 28 JUL 2010 200906086 UNCLASSIFIED

2. (SBU) While anti-missionary groups such as the ultra-Orthodox Yad L'Achim ("Hand to Brothers") have long sought to uproot Messianic Jewish and Evangelical Christian congregations in Israel, their activities have gone largely unnoticed by mainstream Israeli society. Targeted congregations have suffered harassment and occasionally even vandalism or violence at the hands of Yad L'Achim activists, but such incidents rarely made the national press. Despite the harassment, the number of Messianic Jews and Evangelical Christians has grown in recent years through both immigration and conversion. In recent months, however, increased press reporting and complaints from religious freedom activists have indicated an increase in Yad L'Achim activism and a growing, wider backlash against the presence of Evangelical or Messianic Congregations and missionaries living in Jewish communities.

Contacts describe a mounting sense of fear among Messianic and Evangelical communities, and allege a situation of near impunity where police fail to adequately investigate hate crimes against them. They also claim that the Interior Ministry arbitrarily denies benefits to people it identifies as Messianic Jews or Evangelical Christians. For their part, Yad L'Achim and allied activists appear increasingly determined to head off what they see as the "stealing of Jewish souls" by proselytizing "cults" that use deception and manipulation to prey on the weaker sectors of Israeli Jewish society. (Note: Proselytizing is legal in Israel, as long as people are not materially induced into conversion. Proselytizing of less-Orthodox Jews by ultra-Orthodox Jewish sects, such as Chabad, is done openly and without the constraints imposed on non-Jewish groups.

Recent Incidents Underscore Rising Tensions

3. (SBU) While an undercurrent of anti-missionary sentiment has long existed in Israel, several recent incidents describe a dramatic worsening of the situation. As reported in the press, residents of the Tel Aviv suburb of Or Yehuda publicly burned hundreds of Christian Bibles distributed in the community by missionaries in recent months. The May 15 incident was reportedly organized by the Deputy Mayor of Or Yehuda, Attorney Uzi Aharon of Shas, after he received complaints about the Messianic Jewish presence in the area residents. After the incident, Aharon told the Israeli daily Ma'ariv (An Israeli daily newspaper, *BM*) that he sent a group of students from a local ultra-Orthodox school throughout the

town to collect the New Testaments, which were subsequently burned in front of a synagogue, while “hundreds” of students danced around the burning books.

Aharon told Ma’ariv that the municipality operated a team of activists, available 24-hours a day, devoted entirely to uprooting missionary activity, and that the burning was a fulfillment of the commandment to “burn the evil from your midst.” While Aharon subsequently sought to downplay his comments by expressing regret for any damage done to Jewish-Christian relations, he continued to defend the burning, telling Israel Army Radio that it was necessary in order to “purge the evil among us.” (Note: Israel’s Chief Rabbinate, joined by Christian and Muslim leaders from Israel and the West Bank in the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, issued a statement May 27 condemning the Or Yehuda New Testament burning, while also condemning all attempts to convert a person from one faith to another.)

4. (SBU) PoOff obtained a flyer distributed by Aharon’s anti-missionary team in the months before the burning, exhorting residents to “Save your families! . . . Say no to missionaries who look for your soul Be careful! Reject them! Chase them away from the place you live!” The flyer listed the cell phone numbers of Aharon and other members of the team, and was accompanied by leaflets with the names, photos and addresses alongside flyers with hysterical allegations about “soul stealing” and “brainwashing” is a favorite tactic of Yad L’Achim branches throughout the country.)

5. (SBU) Other recent incidents also highlight the growing threat to Messianic and evangelical congregations.

On March 20, 15 year-old Ami Ortiz – a dual American-Israeli citizen and the son of a Messianic Jewish pastor – was seriously wounded when a bomb disguised as a gift basket exploded in his home in the West Bank settlement of Ariel. Earlier this month controversy erupted over the disclosure that an Israeli finalist in the International Jewish Bible Quiz was a Messianic Jew, prompting two Chief Rabbis to call for the cancellation of the quiz on the grounds that selecting the 15 year-old “cult member” represented a “transgression of Jewish law.” In October, arsonists fire-bombed a church in Jewish West Jerusalem shared by Baptists and Messianic Jews, while more recently, residents of the secular, upscale Jerusalem neighborhood of Rehavia threatened violence – an “all-out-war,” in the word of one resident -- over plans by a Messianic Jewish organization to open an information center there.

Bureaucratic Complicity and Police Complacency

4 ½ lines of redacted material Contacts in Messianic and Christian congregations in -redacted - have long complained that police in those cities fail to take seriously hate crimes against their members. Following the Ortiz incident, several member of other congregations throughout the country complained to the press of similar problems in their communities. In a recent meeting with PoOff -2 lines of redacted material - noted a dramatic increase in violent assaults and other crimes against their members in the past year (up from 1-2 a month in early 2007 to 8-10 now), and complained of an almost complete refusal by police to investigate or apprehend the perpetrators.

7. Messianic Jews and evangelical Christians also regularly complain of discrimination in the workplace and by officials in the Interior Ministry and local governments.

19 lines of redacted material

UNCLASSIFIED

Between Jews and Muslims

Part of the following was provided by Geoff Thomas of Aberystwyth, Wales

The Global Islamic population is approximately 1,200,000,000, twenty percent of the world's population. In recognition of their contribution to humanity, they have received the following Nobel Prizes:

Literature:

1988 - Najib Mahfooz

Peace:

1978 - Mohamed Anwar El-Sadat

1990 - Elias James Corey

1994 - Yaser Arafat:

1999 - Ahmed Zewai

Economics: nil

Physics: nil

Medicine:

1960 - Peter Brian Medawar

1998 - Ferid Mourad

TOTAL: 7 (SEVEN)

The Global Jewish population is approximately 14,000,000, about 0.02 percent of the world's population. In recognition of their contribution to humanity, they have received the following Nobel Prizes:

Literature:

1910 - Paul Heyse

1927 - Henri Bergson

1958 - Boris Pasternak

1966 - Shmuel Yosef Agnon

1966 - Nelly Sachs

1976 - Saul Bellow

1978 - Isaac Bashevis Singer

1981 - Elias Canetti

1987 - Joseph Brodsky

1991 - Nadine Gordimer

Physics:

1905 - Adolph Von Baeyer

1906 - Henri Moissan

1907 - Albert Abraham Michelson

1908 - Gabriel Lippmann

1910 - Otto Wallach

1915 - Richard Willstaetter

1918 - Fritz Haber

1921 - Albert Einstein

1922 - Niels Bohr

1925 - James Franck

1925 - Gustav Hertz

1943 - Gustav Stern

1943 - George Charles de Hevesy

1944 - Isidor Issac Rabi

1952 - Felix Bloch

1954 - Max Born

1958 - Igor Tamm

1959 - Emilio Segre

1960 - Donald A. Glaser

1961 - Robert Hofstadter

World Peace:

1911 - Alfred Fried

1911 - Tobias Michael Carel Asser

1968 - Rene Cassin

1973 - Henry Kissinger

1978 - Menachem Begin

1986 - Elie Wiesel

1994 - Shimon Peres

1994 - Yitzhak Rabin

1961 - Melvin Calvin
1962 - Lev Davidovich Landau
1962 - Max Ferdinand Perutz
1965 - Richard Phillips Feynman
1965 - Julian Schwinger
1969 - Murray Gell-Mann
1971 - Dennis Gabor
1972 - William Howard Stein
1973 - Brian David Josephson
1975 - Benjamin Mottleson
1976 - Burton Richter
1977 - Ilya Prigogine
1978 - Arno Allan Penzias
1978 - Peter L Kapitza
1979 - Stephen Weinberg
1979 - Sheldon Glashow
1979 - Herbert Charles Brown
1980 - Paul Berg
1980 - Walter Gilbert
1981 - Roald Hoffmann
1982 - Aaron Klug
1985 - Albert A. Hauptman
1985 - Jerome Karle
1986 - Dudley R. Herschbach
1988 - Robert Huber
1988 - Leon Lederman
1988 - Melvin Schwartz
1988 - Jack Steinberger
1989 - Sidney Altman
1990 - Jerome Friedman
1992 - Rudolph Marcus
1995 - Martin Perl
2000 - Alan J. Heeger

Economics:

1970 - Paul Anthony Samuelson
1971 - Simon Kuznets
1972 - Kenneth Joseph Arrow
1975 - Leonid Kantorovich
1976 - Milton Friedman
1978 - Herbert A. Simon
1980 - Lawrence Robert Klein
1985 - Franco Modigliani
1987 - Robert M. Solow

1990 - Harry Markowitz
1990 - Merton Miller
1992 - Gary Becker
1993 - Robert Fogel

Medicine:

1908 - Elie Metchnikoff
1908 - Paul Erlich
1914 - Robert Barany
1922 - Otto Meyerhof
1930 - Karl Landsteiner
1931 - Otto Warburg
1936 - Otto Loewi
1944 - Joseph Erlanger
1944 - Herbert Spencer Gasser
1945 - Ernst Boris Chain
1946 - Hermann Joseph Muller
1950 - Tadeus Reichstein
1952 - Selman Abraham Waksman
1953 - Hans Krebs
1953 - Fritz Albert Lipmann
1958 - Joshua Lederberg
1959 - Arthur Kornberg
1964 - Konrad Bloch
1965 - Francois Jacob
1965 - Andre Lwoff
1967 - George Wald
1968 - Marshall W. Nirenberg
1969 - Salvador Luria
1970 - Julius Axelrod
1970 - Sir Bernard Katz
1972 - Gerald Maurice Edelman
1975 - Howard Martin Temin
1976 - Baruch S. Blumberg
1977 - Roselyn Sussman Yalow
1978 - Daniel Nathans
1980 - Baruj Ben-cerraf
1984 - Cesar Milstein
1985 - Michael Stuart Brown
1985 - Joseph L. Goldstein
1986 - Stanley Cohen & Rita Levi-Montalcini
1988 - Gertrude Elion
1989 - Harold Varmus
1991 - Erwin Neher

1991 - Bert Sakmann
1993 - Richard J. Roberts
1993 - Phillip Sharp
1994 - Alfred Gilman

1995 - Edward B. Lewis
1996- Lu Rose Iacovino
TOTAL: 129

Jews do not hijack planes, kill athletes, blow themselves up in buses, restaurants and hotels, or threaten death upon people they do not like because they write books or draw cartoons. Jewish leaders do not call for a world Jihad against unbelievers and do not face non-Jews with the choice of death or conversion.

Arabs lived in Palestine for generations and were satisfied with it being a malaria-ridden swamp in the north, a stark desert in the south and a mountainous central section denuded of trees. There was no infrastructure, no industry and no international commerce. Their countries remain disease-ridden, backward and oppressive. There is not a single true democracy in any Arab country. The Jews came to the country and, within 60 years, turned it into one of the most technologically and agriculturally advanced countries in the world, dried the swamps, planted millions of trees and are slowly pushing back the desert. Israel has a notoriously free press, a vigorous democracy and a free society.

Is it not true that, “if the Palestinians laid down their weapons, there would be no more violence; If the Israelis laid down their weapons, there would be no more Israel” (Israeli Prime Minister, Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu)?

Not all of Israel’s policies and practices are praiseworthy. But Israel is fighting for its sheer physical existence. Still, it maintains high democratic standards and – in the teeth of aberrations - its army has conducted itself with commendable moral integrity. Can you point to a single instance in which Arabs or Muslims were incarcerated, or even brought to trial in a Muslim country, for violence against Israelis? Israel has prosecuted and punished soldiers when they were discovered to have acted contrary to international military codes of conduct.

Can you point to a single act of governmental kindness carried out by an Arab government toward Israelis? Israel continues to provide gas, water and electricity to Gaza while being repeatedly attacked by the regime there.

We do not have to agree with everything Israel does (do not) to treat Israel with a more even-handed approach than is becoming increasingly popular in the West. Jew- hatred has always found its purportedly legitimate excuse. It is nothing less than an irrational, visceral hatred, masquerading with a moral and political garb. Criticize Israel when it deserves criticism. But dare you deny the right of the Jewish people to exist, or to have their own State?

Family and Ministry News

Bracha and I are busier than we have ever been. I’m up as has been my custom for many years and at my computer for most of the day, except for meal-times and when Bracha pries me away to visit someone, greet guests or go out for a time. I am jealous of every moment that could be spent in writing – there is so much to do and so little time remaining. “The woods are lovely: dark and deep.

But I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep.”

Over the last few weeks, in response to an invitation to teach in Germany this January on **Malachi**, I have set **Matthew** and **Romans** aside and have kicked up a storm studying and writing on Malachi. Needless to say, to understand the prophet’s message one needs to take Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah into account, as well as Deuteronomy and Leviticus... I’ve been having a ball! That work is now completed and I have reverted to editing **Matthew** and working on **Romans**.

Following delays, my **Judges** is being prepared for the printer in Israel and should be in print in the next few months. Shepherd Press has undertaken to publish my **Jonah** (in English). I intend to prepare **Hosea** for my next book in English, and then **Joel and Amos**.

We are now editing the last OT volume in the **Hebrew Bible for Youth**. Last week we worked on **Lamentations**. I am to give the second and review to **Ruth** and **The Song of Songs** in the next few days, and then they will be sent to the various control groups. Progress is encouraging. Decisions made for previous volumes have reduced the amount of time it takes us to resolve translational issues in this one.

Bracha and I are glad to be part of **the church**. Bracha is planning the Women’s Fellowship, for which she was asked to be responsible, and Baruch is assisting Simon and Miri in planning and conducting for the **newly-formed Youth Group**. The formation of this group has meant that Baruch, contrary to expectations, will have to continue with the **Young Adults Group** until a suitable replacement for him has been found. **Danielle, Iliya, Alena, Danielle** and **David** continue to serve and cherish your prayers. **Itsik** has interviewed and passed the initial testing stage for a crack unit in the military. Your prayers for him will also be much appreciated. Pray, too, for **Denise** and **Irena**.

Avital and family report nothing new except that **Noam** scored a goal – a major achievement for this gentle, sweet child, who has just turned 11. With her, **Maya** and **Nadav** continue to be a source of joy and the objects of their parents’ love.

Following Keith’s call to the pastorate and ordination, **Keith and Shlomit** are now awaiting the church’s decision with regard to Keith’s salary and the social benefits to be accorded him. Following that, they plan to begin look for a house to purchase. They are very committed to the spiritual and social welfare of the Church they serve, and grateful for the privilege to do so.

Tamar and family have moved back to Everett, and Marcus has taken up a new position with Boeing. They have rented a comfortable house and are busy now turning it into a bustling home. The three girls and their families are planning to spend Thanksgiving together there, and we are hoping to be able to see them all together when Bracha and I visit the US next year.

Rose is undergoing an interesting, two-month course in the army. The course was devised to encourage the conversion of non-Jewish soldiers to Judaism, but has become a means by which evangelical soldiers are confirmed in their faith due to the revelation of Judaism's poverty which the course accords. Another believer from our congregation is attending the same course with her, and they have opportunity for fellowship.

Katya underwent a simple but difficult operation due to the development of a riblet that applied troublesome pressure to a nerve and blood vessels leading to her right arm and hand. She is recuperating at home. They have recently contracted to purchase a flat, into which they hope to move within a year.

2011 USA Trip

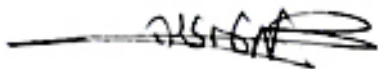
In **2011**, Bracha and I plan to be **in the USA** again. After much hesitation, in an effort to reduce costs when travelling in the US, we are looking at the purchase of a vehicle that will permit high mileage per gallon and no rental costs. We estimate that, within three trips or less, we could fully cover the cost of such a purchase, and still have the value of the vehicle on hand. Any use of the vehicle thereafter would entail considerable savings.

Churches interested in Baruch's ministry in the course of the oncoming visit are invited to write and inform us. The rise in the value of the Shekel in relation to both the US Dollar and the Euro has reduced the value of our income by income by some 42%. We are no longer able to submit books to external editing, a factor which inevitably reduces my literary output. We will, therefore, make another effort to broaden our support base. Last year's effort was only partially successful. The regular monthly assistance we receive from Patmos remains our financial mainstay. We thank them and others for their faith in us.

If you know of other churches who might be interested in our ministry, please refer them to us.

In Christ by wonderful grace,

Baruch and Bracha Maoz



TAX-deductible **support for our ministry** should be written to the order of **Berean Baptist church, P.O. Box 1233, Grand Blanc, Michigan 48480-3233**. Direct bank transfers may be made to **Franklin Bank, 24725 West Twelve Mile Road, Southfield, MI 48034 USA, Routing Number 241271957 Berean Baptist Special Account No. 567495976**. Please inform **Max Sharp** at Berean Baptist Church by email of the details of the transaction (including date, transaction number and sum) at maxsharp@earthlink.net

All contributions are tax deductible. Receipts are sent at the end of the calendar year or at the donor's request. Please do not send contributions directly to us – we consider accountability extremely important.

Funds sent for the ministry will be used exclusively for that purpose.
We reserve the right to use for the ministry funds sent for personal use