

From The ADL Desk

By Ira Gissen, Director
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Anti-Defamation League of
B'nai B'rith



Ira Gissen

During recent weeks we have received a number of inquiries from Jewish people in North Carolina and Virginia regarding broadcasts by Mike Evans Ministries. People have asked, "Should we send him a contribution?" or "We have sent him money; did we do the right thing?"

First of all, who is Mike Evans? Mike Evans is a pro-Israel evangelist who seeks to convert Jews to Christianity. In 1972 he organized B'nai Yeshua (in English known as Sons Of Jesus or Sons Of Salvation).

Evangelists who are enthusiastically pro-Israel but who also seek to convert Jews to Christianity pose a dilemma, or at least so it appears. Jewish people have always been disturbed and upset by efforts to convert them, yet efforts to convert are part of the Christian religion and the main activity of evangelists, some of whom are strongly pro-Israel and some of whom are hostile to Jews or even anti-Semitic. Indeed, many denominations now oppose organized efforts at conversion.

In 1972 Mike Evans established his headquarters in the small town of Graham, Texas. His stated purpose was spreading the Christian gospel among Jewish communities in the United States. In the Fall of 1976 his activities received a great deal of publicity in the New York Metropolitan Press and even in national news magazines when B'nai Yeshua purchased a national headquarters in Stony Brook, Long Island which, according to Time Magazine, comprised a 12 acre \$1,105,000.00 estate. Evans told reporters that his group numbered more than 3,000 individuals, two-thirds of whom were Jews who had converted to Christianity. Following a great deal of

publicity the headquarters opened and the first meeting attracted 450 persons.

By 1978, according to published reports, B'nai Yeshua's staff had grown to 51 people and it had distributed about one million pieces of literature in the metropolitan area during the preceding summer. Evans said this led about 500 people, approximately 20 percent of them Jewish, to make "the decision for the Messiah" and accept Jesus Christ as their savior.

In 1980 the group announced that it was leaving Stony Brook.

As I write these words, I hold in my hand copies of Mike Evans Ministries' "Proclamation of Blessing" imprinted with the names of Jewish citizens in this area. The "Proclamation" begins as follows, "As an American, I support the important covenant that exists between the State of Israel and the United States." It concludes, "I believe that Israel is also America's key to survival as a world power, and I pledge to pray for Israel and the United States of America." Attached to the "Proclamation of Blessing" is a card soliciting contributions to be sent to Mike Evans Ministries in Bedford, Texas.

Clearly, evangelists who are enthusiastically pro-Israel but who also seek to convert Jews to Christianity pose a dilemma for a number of Jews, or at least that is how it appears.

Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

The Laser Beam

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

"The concept of "concentration in Torah" has its parallel in the exciting development of the laser beam."

There are many who complain that the system Moshe brought down to us from Sinai is too restrictive; if one limits himself to observing mitzvos and studying Torah what can one accomplish in the world? Yet the truth is quite the reverse: "There is no one as free as he who preoccupies himself with Torah." Only through channeling and concentrating one's energies and talents through Torah can one have a far reaching effect on his friends, on his acquaintances and on society at large.

Everything can be understood by analogies from physical phenomena. The concept of "concentration in Torah" has its parallel in the exciting development of the laser beam. When a ray of light is needed to illuminate or to warm a distant object, the following problem is encountered: A ray of light becomes weaker and weaker as it gets further from its source. The light-source (lamp etc.) is the point of greatest intensity; the further the ray travels the more it spreads out, dissipating its intensity and weakening its effect. A new concept was developed; if a ray of light is to be powerful and effective even over a distance of miles, a way must be found to concentrate and "restrict" the ray so that it should not spread. This is the laser beam; its rays shine in one direction—not scattered—for the entire length of the beam. It is concentrated, limited and incredibly power-

ful; even a metal barrier several inches thick, and at considerable distance from the source, can be pierced by a laser beam.

THE LESSON: The complaint is a familiar one: "To be effective in this world, to be a "mentsch" in society, one must be looked upon as cultured, educated, knowledgeable, sophisticated. One must therefore be diversified, one must have a broad range

of interests outside of matters pertaining to Judaism." But the laser beam proclaims a different message: Through concentration and limitation within the unidirectional "four cubits" of Torah, mitzvos-observance and prayer, each of us attains such a powerful concentration of energies that "even a wall of iron will not separate him from his father in heaven," and our effect on others and on society is equally penetrating.



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Seagram Sponsors Israeli TV Programs

The Seagram Wine Company recently signed a one-year contract to sponsor The Simcha Dinitz Show, a public affairs television program produced in Jerusalem and broadcast in the U.S. over National Jewish Television, a cable TV network. The sponsorship consists of 30 second spots and opening and closing audio-visual billboards on each weekly show which airs Sundays from 3:00 - 3:30 p.m. The

brands currently advertised are Paul Masson generics and Champagnes and Partager, America's most popular French wine.

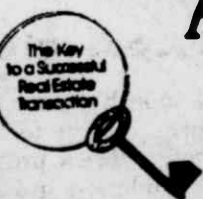
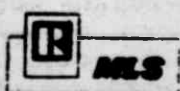
The show is hosted by Simcha Dinitz, former Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. His guests include prominent political figures, performing artists and intellectual leaders, such as members of the Israeli Knesset and violinist Isaac Stern. Discussion focuses on

politics, current events and the arts.

Through National Jewish Television, the program reaches approximately two million homes, including over one million in the New York City metropolitan area and New Jersey. It also airs over Group W Cable TV in Manhattan on Wednesday evenings from 9:00 - 9:30 with an additional potential audience of 74,000.

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