

# The ADL targets Cardinal O'Connor

by Kathleen Klenetsky

Is the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith deliberately attempting to set back Jewish-Catholic relations by hundreds of years?

It's hard to draw any other conclusion from the insulting response which the ADL has made to John Cardinal O'Connor's statements criticizing recent moves by Israeli Jewish fundamentalists to forcibly seize property in the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem.

In a signed commentary in the May 21 *New York Post*, national director Abe Foxman scored "church leaders and others" who have spoken out against the seizure, calling their disapproval "outrageously disproportionate to the act itself."

Although he didn't mention O'Connor by name, Foxman obviously had the cardinal as his chief target, since it was O'Connor's outspoken criticism of the incident which has received extensive publicity.

The ADL's assault on O'Connor—who, it should be noted, has traveled extensively in the Mideast, and ranks among the strongest advocates of Jewish-Catholic dialogue—stems from an incident which took place in Jerusalem in April, in which a group of fundamentalists from the Ateret Cohanim yeshiva forced their way into a Greek Orthodox-owned hostel adjoining the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the traditional site of Christ's burial.

Occurring as it did during Holy Week, the most sacred and solemn period of the Christian liturgical year, the action was clearly intended to exacerbate Jewish-Christian tensions—which it succeeded in doing. Perhaps the worst aspect of the incident was that it received de facto backing from the Israeli government: Israeli courts granted an injunction to the provocateurs, allowing them to stay in the building at least through Easter weekend, while Israeli Housing Minister David Levi, a rabid expansionist, admitted that government funds had been used to finance part of the operation.

## 'Reprehensible and obscene'

It was Israeli government backing for the attack on Christian holy places that undoubtedly prompted Cardinal O'Connor to react so strongly. "What has happened in Jerusalem is obscene," he bluntly charged in the May 24 *Catholic New York*. "In my judgment," he continued, "the Israeli government has acted reprehensibly both in what the American

Jewish Congress calls participation 'in a clandestine effort to settle Jews in the Christian Quarter of Jerusalem' (an act financed by the same government), and in failing to repudiate what it has done."

the leaders of the major Christian communities in Jerusalem, which charged that the "government-backed . . . armed settlement . . . further endangers the survival of all Christian communities in the Holy City."

Of particular significance, O'Connor reported in his column that there are some who believe that the incident "is only a signal of a conspiracy to grab land all over Israel currently occupied by Christians. Some people,"

"even tell me they believe it reflects a speeding up of a design to make it virtually impossible for Christians to function freely anywhere in the land."

As *EIR* has documented extensively in the past (see *EIR*, March 3, 1989, "Kissinger and the West Bank landscam"), such a conspiracy definitely exists, traceable to the highest levels of British Freemasonry. A key individual involved in this conspiracy is Asher Kaufman, an agent of London's Quatuor Coronati Freemasonic Lodge. Since his arrival in Israel in the late 1960s, Kaufman has played a central role in the scheme to rebuild Solomon's Temple on the Temple Mount, currently the site of the Al Aqsa Mosque. As *EIR* reported in its May 4 issue this year, Ateret Cohanim—which was formed in 1978 by three active-duty officers of the Israeli domestic intelligence agency Shin Beth—had as its founding purpose the destruction of the Al Aqsa Mosque, as a prelude to rebuilding the Temple—a sure-fire prescription for religious war.

Despite this, the ADL's Foxman treated the settlers' action as almost trivial in his *New York Post* piece. Conceding that the move was "provocative,"

its importance, saying that the "incident, after all, represents a single transgression in Israel's long record of preserving religious harmony in Jerusalem."

Foxman further implied that the critics of the action are at fault, and not the Israeli government. "One must unfortunately conclude that those seeking to escalate Israeli-Palestinian tensions have used the delicate religious balance in the Holy City for less than holy objectives,"

The ADL's censure of O'Connor was echoed by Elan Steinberg, director of Edgar Bronfman's World Jewish Congress. Steinberg charged that the cardinal, by defending the legitimate rights of Christians and Muslims against an illegal action by the Israeli government, was somehow "throwing fire on a very tense situation."

O'Connor has taken great pains to express his concern that the incident is hurting Israel just as much as Christians and Muslims. Questioned about his criticism of the incident, O'Connor told reporters that "any friend of Israel, of the Jewish cause . . . has to say, 'I think that the government of Israel is being perceived as doing something that is self-destructive.'"