

Christian Group To Help Repair Damaged L.A. Shul

LOS ANGELES (JTA) — A coalition of Christian churches has volunteered to help repair a local synagogue slightly damaged by three fires intentionally set last week.

Shalom International Ministry of Orange, Calif., has pledged the support of its 120 member-churches in the Los Angeles and Orange County areas in repairing Temple Beth Tikvah of Fullerton, Calif., an Orange County synagogue.

Temple Rabbi Haim Asa and Fullerton Police Detective Don Price said three gasoline fires were set on synagogue property.

A sprinkler system apparently extinguished the flames, which did slight damage to the pre-treated doors to the synagogue, the cement school building and the redwood fence.

Price, who said he has no leads in his arson investigation, noted that the intent of the crime probably was vandalism.

"There was so much more that they could

have done that they didn't do. It was almost as though they used fire as a vandalism," he said.

He reported that a gasoline can was found on synagogue property.

Also, recently, a young man called the synagogue with a bomb threat. Police checked, but found nothing, Price said. He reported that police are paying extra attention to the synagogue as a "targeted area."

A second caller made reference to the fires and the bomb threat. "We are Palestinians," he said. "Did you receive a bomb threat and vandalism last night? If you continue harassing the Palestinians, we will harass you."

An organization

called Concerned Christians Against Anti-Semitism will meet for Sabbath services Saturday morning at Temple Beth Tikvah and learn Torah with Asa, the rabbi said.

Following that, the Jewish congregants will leave and the Christian group will repair what it can.

The Rev. Frank Eickor, head of the Shalom ministry, said in a news conference he called upon learning of the fires that anti-Semitism is "a cancer that can't be ignored."

"When hate comes into somebody's town, it is their job to stop it in its tracks." Shalom broadcasts a radio program friendly to Israel. Eickor said the Concerned Christians group includes black and white churches.

Fullerton also is home to the neo-Nazi

White American Resistance group led by Tom Metzger as well as some skinheads, according to Asa.

Metzger had broadcasted his inflammatory cable TV program "Race and Reason" from Fullerton until local protests forced him to leave for nearby Fallbrook.

Price said the synagogue last year was defaced by a swastika.

Asa, a Holocaust survivor from Bulgaria,

said the synagogue serves 350 families, or about 15 percent of the Jews in northern Orange County.

TEL AVIV (JTA) — An Israeli soldier died recently at a Haifa hospital of wounds he received January 19 in a clash between his Israel Defense Force patrol and terrorist infiltrators in the upper Galilee panhandle, south of Kibbutz Manara.

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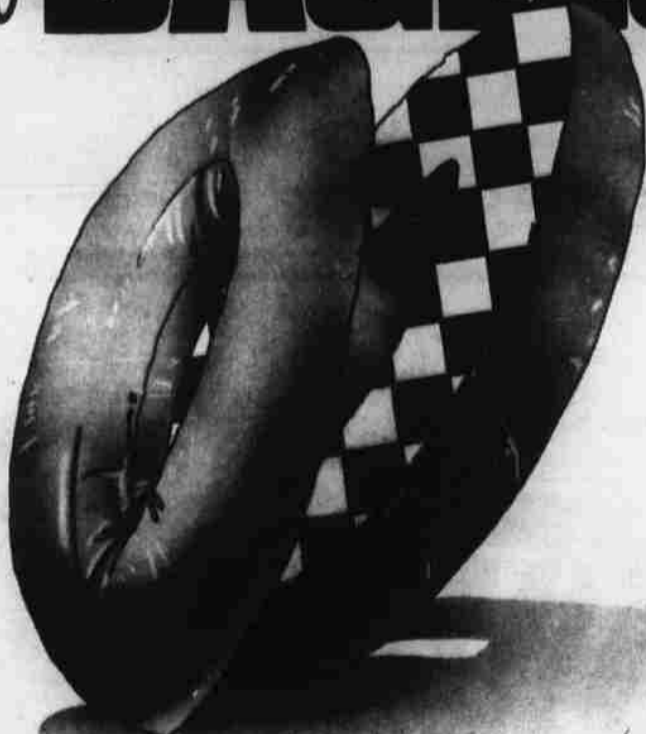
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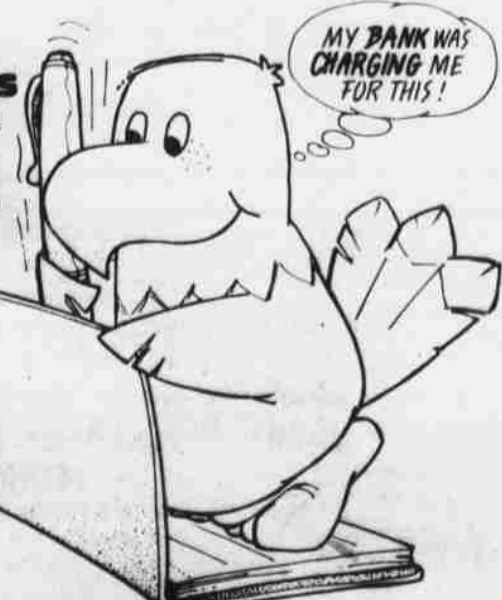
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