

SECURITY NEEDS START WITH THE COMMUNITY: THE LUTHERAN MINISTRIES IN JERUSALEM

Colby Carroll, McMaster Scholar

The Lutheran presence in Israel is ubiquitous, formidable, and longstanding. After the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, it has the largest land holdings of any Christian denomination, and certainly the largest of the Protestant churches. Besides churches, including the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in the Old City, schools, and medical facilities, Lutheran Ministries also operates vocational training facilities, housing units, orphanages, and olive groves. The international Lutheran relief agency, known as the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), operates from beautiful facilities on the top of the Mount of Olives--a strategic and symbolic location. The LWF administers the Augusta Victoria Hospital, one of the best-known medical facilities in the region, and one of the few that serves the Palestinian population.

Security is an ongoing issue for all sides of the conflict in the Middle East. Colby Carroll, a police officer in Defiance County, Ohio, with 15 years of law enforcement experience, military physical security training and education, and a criminal justice student, spoke to a number of individuals in Jerusalem who provided their informed perspectives on the security needs of various institutions and geographical areas. Carroll conducted expert interviews with Louis Lepage, Civil Military Coordination Senior Advisor at the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); officers of the Israeli police force; and officials at B'tselem, the Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories.

Carroll also conducted a series of formal and informal interviews with Jeff Halper, Coordinator of the Israel Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD) and a 2006 Nobel Peace Prize nominee. Halper is a Jewish émigré from the United States and an Israeli citizen who works on human rights issues in the region, including the destruction of Palestinian Arab homes, regional security, refugees, water resources, and general movement by the military. Colby was able to spend extended time with Halper, which included a tour of the "separation barrier" in and around Jerusalem.

Carroll's project focused on conducting a security study. After researching the perspectives and needs of the partner organizations in Israel, Carroll refined his project to focus on assessing the physical security needs of the Augusta Victoria Hospital on the top of the Mount of Olives. The director, Reverend Mark Brown, indicated the need to provide adequate security for

the hospital's staff and clientele while simultaneously providing an open community atmosphere. In coordination with Rev. Brown, Carroll developed and conducted a complete security assessment for the hospital. While the project focused on assessing the basics of physical security, such as medical, residential, and community areas, it also included a plan for training and other security-related issues and needs.

Carroll consulted on the security for the residential area separated from Augusta Victoria by a city street. This assessment was completed with the understanding of the physical structure of the facility in mind, with a focus on the campus as step one.

The survey found that the control of the facility--mechanical, personnel, natural, and structural--needs to be strengthened. Personnel also need more formal training, especially those employed as an unarmed security force for the hospital. However, the lack of physical control of the physical plant and surrounding grounds emerged as the most serious security concern. Currently, neighboring farm animals have access to the olive groves, residential areas, and even areas that if breached, could contaminate sterile environments that would jeopardize the welfare of patients. It quickly became clear that the security assessment was possibly the first in a long list of potential McMaster projects.

