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AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE OPENS SESSION; REPORTS ON ANTI-SEMITISM

NEW YORK, May 16. (JTA) -- The American Jewish Committee today opened its four-day 56th annual meeting here with a report on anti-Semitism abroad based on a year-long survey conducted in 11 European and South American countries. The report, presented by A. M. Sonnabend, president of the organization, established the following facts:

1. The Soviet Government still continues its official anti-Jewish policies. Though the Moscow government denies it, the so-called "economic trials" taking place in the Soviet Union are undoubtedly an attack on what remains of the Jewish community structure. Nearly 60 percent of the executed to date, as a result of these trials, have been Jews. In addition, Jewish religion and culture are being harshly restricted in what seems to be an attempt to cut off Jews from their historic roots.
2. There are more than 500 neo-Nazi, Fascist and anti-Semitic groups in the various countries surveyed. However, only a comparatively small number pose any major threat. There is no evidence of a neo-Nazi nor anti-Semitic network and no formal cooperation among these groups. However, their publications promote one another and there is evidence of unified propaganda campaigns.
3. Anti-Semitic movements are aiming their propaganda particularly at youth and youth groups in some countries. Anti-Semitism is being used as a political weapon in countries which are in the midst of political turmoil or instability. This is especially true in South America.

Says Attitudes to Jews in Western Europe Undergoing Change

The survey which was conducted by the Committee's offices in Paris, Frankfurt, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro and representatives in other major cities also found the following conditions--especially in Western Europe--which are countering the growth and spread of anti-Semitism abroad:

1. Attitude towards Jews in Western Europe are undergoing a profound change. The people of those nations feel a sense of shame over the fate of the 6,000,000 Jews murdered during the Hitler era.
2. A "quiet revolution" is developing among Christians; "some churches recognizing that their own teaching materials have all too often served to perpetuate anti-Jewish prejudice, have now undertaken to re-examine their own practices and positions."

Mr. Sonnabend stressed that although the "scattered anti-Semitic movements lack central planning and direction and attempts to unify these groups have apparently failed," there is cooperation, "particularly for propaganda purposes."

The AJC president stressed the neo-Nazi and neo-Fascist groups are continuously tempting "to take advantage of unsettled political conditions and to infiltrate organizations of disaffected citizens." He cited the foothold gained by anti Semites in the Algerian Army Organization and the widespread campaigns of armed violence against Jews in wake of political instability in Argentina.

He suggested a three-point program to combat and neutralize anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi groups abroad:

1. Continued surveillance and study--a careful day to day watch--over the activities anti-Semitic groups everywhere.
2. These groups should be denied the publicity they crave. Lacking cohesion and moral strength, such movements can only survive by keeping their names before the public. These quarantine methods have worked in the United States and would undoubtedly rate well on an international level.
3. Long range programs of education, concerning Jews and Judaism.

With regard to the Soviet Union, Mr. Sonnabend said that "anti-Semitic measures there officially sanctioned." In spite of the fact that Soviet spokesmen keep reiterating their try's constitutional guarantees of religious freedom, the Soviet Government continues to bridge the religious and cultural rights of Jews and restrain Jewish community life--prohibiting the baking of matzoth for Passover," he stressed.

DR. SLAWSON PREDICTS UNPRECEDENTED DEVELOPMENT OF JEWISH LIFE IN U.S.

NEW YCRK, May 16. (JTA) -- "If conditions in this country continue to improve as they have in recent years, the American environment favors the development of Jewish group survival to a degree never before experienced in the long and turbulent history of Jewry," Dr. John Slawson, executive vice-president of the American Jewish Committee, told the annual meeting of his organization now taking place here.

"The American environment," he declared, "is friendly and permissive toward a variety of identities, either creedal, communal, sacred or secular- all are in harmony with the general pattern of American group life today. Therefore, the wholesome integration of the American Jew by means of full participation in all aspects of the life of America, but with the retention of his religio-cultural identity is, all other things being equal, now a realistic expectation."

Dr. Slawson pointed out that, while there are certain restrictive forces to the development of group identity in the United States, such as the trend to conformity characteristic of a mass and technological culture, nevertheless the permissive and hospitable forces in America for the development of Jewish group identity or, for that matter any form of acceptable group identity, is definitely a reality.

"Within the Jewish community itself today there is an increasing concern with the problem of integration but of an unassimilated nature," he stated. "There is, as a matter of fact, today among Jewish community leaders, a greater concern with the defense against assimilation than with the defense against discrimination. A Jewish individual can no longer rely on the non-Jew to tell him what he is, he must decide and affirm the fact for himself. If he doesn't, he will cease to exist as a Jew."

Cites Studies Showing Strong Desire for Jewish Identity

"In spite of certain self-hate tendencies among a minor portion of the American Jewish population, the forces within the Jewish community of America are definitely in favor of Jewish identity and Jewish group survival, when we consider the attitudes toward Jewishness," Dr. Slawson continued. "All of our studies yield results indicating that there is definitely a will to survive, and that this will to survive as Jews is, as a matter of fact, even greater among adolescents than among their parents."

"Our studies reveal that 93 percent of those questioned in some of our communities are in favor of Jews remaining as a distinctive group; and that, when asked if they would be reborn, what religious identity they would choose, 82 percent of parents and 88 percent of adolescents replied that they would wish to be reborn as Jews."

Reports Increase in Intermarriage; Gives Data on Jewish Births

Demographically, Dr. Slawson went on to report, the situation takes on a different aspect. "The intermarriage rate is far greater than we had perceived," he said. "Recent studies indicate that the rate is about twice the percentage that we had formerly assumed. And, while Jews tend to marry outside their group to a lesser extent than those of the Catholic or Protestant faiths, it should be taken into consideration that, because of the smallness of the Jewish group, a given percentage has a greater impact. The rate of intermarriage is particularly high in sparsely settled parts of the United States."

The American Jewish Committee leader said that Jews also tend to replace themselves, that is, live births replacing deaths, to a lesser extent than is the case with Protestants and Catholics. "While it takes 2,130 live births per 1,000 women for adequate replacement in the general American population--for Jews, only 1,749 per 1,000 married women are replaced," he reported.

However, he added, another source of resistance to assimilation is residence concentration. The Jewish population, residentially, instead of dispersing itself, as was anticipated, is concentrating in definite areas, especially in suburbs where we have a "regathering" of the Jewish population," he said.

"In summary, therefore, the American environment is permissive for Jewish group identity and Jewish group survival," he pointed out. "The attitudes among Jews themselves are for the most part affirmative; the will to survive as a group is strong. But demographically, we may anticipate a diminution of the size of the American Jewish population in the years to come unless new factors enter into the situation."

"There is, in addition, a very important limiting factor to assimilation, namely that, as time goes on, if we can judge by the past, there is going to continue to be an expectancy that Americans become members of religious groups. In that case, the Jewish group will follow suit, so that being Jewish may become less 'a way of life' in the traditional sense, and more 'a style of life' as an associational expression," Dr. Slawson predicted.

Considering the developing trends in the American environment, the pursuit to conform to a mythical American type is fruitless for it is, in fact, non-existent, Dr. Slawson said. "Differences are becoming more and more respected and there is increasing receptivity to them," he pointed out. "In this free and open society walls of separation for survival purposes are useless. The most important determining factor in the preservation of the Jewish group will be the degree to which one obtains a personal satisfaction and enrichment in his Jewish identity."

FRANCE DETERMINED TO IMPOSE A 'STATUS QUO' ON ARAB-ISRAEL FRONTIERS

PARIS, May 16. (JTA) -- The French Government is "determined" to impose a territorial status quo between the Arab States and Israel, Foreign Minister Maurice Couve de Murville assured Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee here last night.

"Non-intervention in the internal affairs of foreign states," he declared, "does not rule out on the part of the Western governments the implementation of certain responsibilities to impose the status quo between Israel and the Arab states."

Going one step further, and mentioning specifically the 1950 Tripartite Declaration by France, Britain and the United States, which guaranteed the integrity of the Israeli-Arab borders, the Franco-Israeli Alliance voted a resolution today, calling upon the Government to intervene in the Middle East, in accord with that 1950 measure, "and safeguard the equilibrium of power and the independence of all states in the Middle East."

The resolution was adopted at a meeting celebrating Israel's anniversary, attended by leading French political figures and intellectuals. Among those present at the meeting were four members of the Cabinet and more than 100 members of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate.

WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS TO AID SMALL COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT WORLD

NEW YORK, May 16. (JTA) -- The World Jewish Congress in New York will sponsor a Community Service Corps to aid small Jewish communities throughout the world in their search for qualified community personnel, it was announced here today by Samuel Bronfman, vice-president of the organization.

Through the new service, the World Jewish Congress in New York will become a clearing house for information concerning vacancies in small communities, and volunteers willing to serve in remote places. All financial details will be agreed upon between the community and the applicant, with the WJC acting only as liaison.

Mr. Bronfman said that the WJC would invite "rabbinical and educational colleges of American Jewry, as well as of such major communities as Canada and Argentina to cooperate in our program of finding volunteers for Community Service Corps. We would naturally also cooperate with the pertinent Israeli authorities in finding such personnel," he said.

YOUNG LEADERSHIP CABINET OF U. J. A. STARTS THREE-DAY MEETING TODAY

TUXEDO, N. Y., May 16. (JTA) -- The young Jewish leaders who constitute the United Jewish Appeal's recently established Young Leadership Cabinet will be in session starting tomorrow at the Onchiota Conference Center in nearby Sterling Forest for one of the most unusual three-day study meetings in the 25-year history of the UJA. The weekend conference, which is being addressed by prominent American and Israeli figures, will explore the Jewish future in the United States, Europe and Israel.

Alan Sagner of Newark, N. J., national chairman of the Young Leadership Cabinet and general chairman of the 1963 United Jewish Appeal campaign of Essex County, is presiding. Some 40 young men, all under 40 years of age, are in attendance from every part of the country. The principal speakers and the topics they will cover are:

Edward M. M. Warburg, chairman of the Joint Distribution Committee and a former general chairman of the UJA, will lead the opening session tomorrow in a discussion of the subject: "Leadership of the U. S. Jewish Community in Transition." Rabbi Herbert A. Friedman, executive vice-chairman of the UJA, who was a chief proponent of the idea of bringing a national young leadership group into existence as an integral part of the United Jewish Appeal, will lead a discussion under the subject title: "The U. S. Jewish Community in the '60's." Israel Ambassador to the United States Avraham Harman will speak and set the stage for Saturday evening's discussion. His subject will be "Israel as a Rising Modern Society."

18 JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTERS IN NEW YORK CLOSE IN DISPUTE WITH UNION

NEW YORK, May 16. (JTA) -- Three of the largest YM-YWHA's in the country--the 92nd Street 'Y,' Washington Heights and East New York--were shut down today, and 15 other Y's and Jewish community centers throughout the New York City will be closed down for an indefinite period beginning tomorrow, due to a dispute between the Associated YM YWHA's of New York and Local 1707 of the Community and Social Agency Employees Union.

Announcement of the shutdown was made today by Edward First, chairman of the Joint Agencies Negotiating Committee, with which the union has been conducting talks since last February in an attempt to reach agreement on higher wages for its 350 members. The members include professional social workers as well as maintenance and clerical workers.

According to the management group, the professional workers were offered pay increases ranging from an additional \$1,350 a year to \$1,480 a year, while clerical and maintenance workers were offered weekly increases of \$5.12.