

JTA daily news bulletin

Published by Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Inc. 660 First Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10016

Contents copyright: Republication only by previous arrangement.

Vol. XXXVI - Fifty-Second Year

Friday, January 10, 1969

No. 7

Jewish College Students Picket French Office, Demand Boycott of Products, Services

NEW YORK, Jan. 9 (JTA)--An organization of Jewish college students demanded a boycott of all French products and services today as a thousand of them picketed French offices here and paraded through other parts of the city with placards denouncing Gen. de Gaulle's embargo on arms and spare parts shipments to Israel. Several American Jewish organizations, while not demanding a boycott of France, condemned the embargo and urged the French Government to rescind it. (Students also picketed the French Embassy in Israel).

The student pickets came from Columbia University, New York University, City College, Queens College, Brooklyn College, Yeshiva University and Stern College. They were organized by the Ad Hoc Committee of American Youth for Peace and Justice in the Middle East. The committee was set up by members of national Jewish youth organizations. The students marched in front of the mid-town Manhattan building that houses offices of the French Tourist Office, the Compagnie Generale Transatlantique, France's major steamship line, and the French Bookshop. They also picketed the Renault automobile plant in Englewood Cliffs, N.J. and marched through the predominantly Jewish garment district and diamond trading centers in Manhattan. Their placards urged people to go to Israel instead of France, to travel on El Al, Israel's airline, instead of Air France, and accused the French Government of aiding the Arab wish to destroy Israel.

Rabbi Arthur J. Lelyveld, American Jewish Congress president, assailed the French embargo in a statement and urged the French people to demand that their Government reverse its Middle East policy. He said, "American Jews who travel to France, purchase French goods and use French services can take encouragement from the French people's strong opposition to the peculiar definition of neutrality which President de Gaulle has sought to impose on the Middle East." The Jewish War Veterans of the United States denounced the embargo as a "hostile, one-sided act" and urged France to reconsider it.

Israel Delays Decision on Seeking Refund of \$100 Million in Embargoed Materiel

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9 (JTA)--Government sources said today that no formal decision has been made so far on whether to demand a refund from France for \$100 million worth of embargoed military equipment. A decision may be announced after the Cabinet meets next Monday. Various aspects of the situation were being studied by legal, financial and defense experts who will present their recommendations to the Cabinet. The flow of strategic materiel to Israel was halted last week when the de Gaulle Government imposed a "total embargo" in the aftermath of Israel's Dec. 28 reprisal raid on Beirut Airport. The new embargo includes all weapons, spare parts, missiles, ammunition and helicopters.

A Defense Ministry spokesman said today that diplomatic and political factors, in addition to financial considerations, would be weighed before Israel decided whether to demand a refund. Observers here noted that such a demand would acknowledge that the de Gaulle embargo was final. Nevertheless, lawyers for the Foreign and Defense Ministries were scrutinizing clauses in various contracts with private French firms. They were trying to determine whether French Government approval of the contracts constituted a guarantee of their terms, including delivery. In that event, the French Government could be held liable, some sources said. A French spokesman said yesterday that so far as the private contractors were concerned the embargo was a "force majeure" which freed them from the terms of their contracts with Israel.

French Government Denies Statement That France Will Not Return Money

PARIS, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A Government spokesman denied a statement made by the French Information Minister Joel Le Theule yesterday that France would not refund \$100 million to Israel for embargoed military equipment. Neither the spokesman nor other official circles would say today what the Government's position was on the matter. M. Le Theule, who was questioned at a press conference on the possibility of a refund to Israel, said yesterday, "There is nothing to pay back as the planes (50 Mirage V jets which Israel paid for in full last spring) are being kept for Israel's use and are not being used for any other purposes." He added, however, that this was his "personal opinion" and that "the French Government has not yet discussed or decided the issue." The \$50 million worth of planes are part of the hardware that Israel will not get until a United Nations peace settlement is effected in the Middle East. The Mirages have been grounded under a limited embargo imposed on fighter aircraft after the June, 1967 Arab-Israel war.

Debre Will Appear Before Legislative Organs to Answer Embargo Questions

PARIS, Jan. 9 (JTA)--Foreign Minister Michel Debre will appear before the foreign affairs committee of the French Senate and National Assembly later this month to answer questions on the Government's arms embargo against Israel which has aroused widespread protests in political circles and in the French press. His appearance was demanded today by many Senators and Deputies. He will appear before the Senate committee on Jan. 15 and before the National Assembly committee Jan. 23. M. Debre said yesterday that Western countries should stop making money on the Middle East arms race and

start taking steps to promote peace in the region. He said France continued to champion Israel's right to exist. Newspapers of all political persuasions and the French radio were infuriated by a Government allegation yesterday that opposition to the embargo on arms and spare parts shipments to Israel stemmed from Israeli influences. Some sources saw anti-Semitic overtones in a statement by Information Minister Joel Le Theule, which they believe, echoed remarks made by President Charles de Gaulle at yesterday's Cabinet meeting.

M. Le Theule, asked at a press conference to comment on the barrage of criticism leveled against the embargo, said, "It has been noted that the Israeli lobby has been active and has tried to influence circles close to the information media." Newspapers here have demanded to know what "circles" and what "information media" were allegedly being influenced. Observers noted that anti-Semites have often tried to exploit a vague feeling that persists among the French public that Jewish influences are especially strong in the newspaper and radio world.

One of the sharpest attacks on the embargo was levelled by the newspaper *Le Monde*, never pro-Israel. Its editor, Hubert Beuve-Mery, called the Government's decision "unacceptable" and referred to Gen. de Gaulle's action as "fraudulent." He said further that it was "cynical" for France to keep the money for the planes and equipment that it refused to send to Israel.

Roger Massif, foreign editor of the conservative newspaper, *Le Figaro*, said in an editorial today, "Apparently taking a position hostile to the official policy cannot be from pure motives." He said the Government's insinuations were "unacceptable" and "gave rise to defamation where no details are furnished nor proofs offered." Joseph Van Den Ech, one of the chief editors of the conservative newspaper *L'Aurore*, said Gen. de Gaulle's personal decision to slap an embargo on Israel "wiped out everything that was opposed to absolutism" in the French Constitution. He said it was astonishing that Gen. de Gaulle made the decision without consulting his Government and that not one member of his Cabinet seemed surprised.

The Israel Embassy reported today that it was flooded with thousands of letters and phone calls from various political personalities who wanted to express sympathy and support for Israel.

Report Soviet Peace Proposal for Mideast Draws Mixed State Department Response

WASHINGTON, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A reported Soviet proposal for a Mideast solution involving written Arab renunciations of belligerency drew mixed responses from State Department officials today. Some diplomats were encouraged by what they interpreted as evidence of Russian movement toward a demarche that would reduce tensions. But others were wary and cautioned that Moscow is seeking a political victory for the Arabs and is exploiting the issue for propaganda purposes.

Those skeptical of the sincerity of the Russian "peace offensive" pointed out that Moscow visualized only the unilateral withdrawal of Israeli forces without collateral Arab peace commitments and credible assurances of Israeli transit rights through the Suez Canal and Gulf of Aqaba.

When examined, the Soviet proposals do not indicate that the Arabs are prepared to enter into a meaningful and lasting peace agreement, officials said. Key aim of Moscow is the re-opening of the Suez Canal for Soviet munitions shipments to North Vietnam they noted.

Dayan Warns Arabs Israel Prepared to Wage War; Lebanon Getting Militant Government

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9 (JTA)--Israel Defense Minister Gen. Moshe Dayan warned the Arab nations today that Israel was "psychologically" and "militarily" prepared to wage war. As he spoke here to 168 Jewish leaders, Premier-designate Rashid Karami in Lebanon began forming a new Cabinet, expected to be "hawk"-like in its dealings with Israel. He is a vigorous nationalist and an admirer of President Nasser of Egypt.

Gen. Dayan told Prime Minister Levi Eshkol's five-day conference of representatives from 55 organizations and communities in 21 countries that the Egyptian front "is the principal arena of a future conflict, if the Egyptians attack us." He said "considerable preparation" had been made in the area against a possible attack. Gen. Dayan said that Israel's enemies were preparing to renew war, that if they do, Israel will win, and that Israel will not agree to any peace arrangement not reached through direct negotiations with the Arabs.

Gen. Dayan asserted that guerillas attacking civilians and property were supported financially by oil-rich states like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. "We will not tolerate a situation in which guerrillas will be at liberty to operate freely across the border without being able to do likewise and hit back at them also," he said. Gen. Dayan told a questioner that he did not "for one moment" regret Israeli reprisal actions including the Dec. 28 raid at the Beirut airport. If Israel had not reacted so rapidly to a terrorist attack on an El Al plane in Athens a few days earlier, it was doubtful whether its national airline could have gone on operating, he said. The French embargo imposed last week on war materiel shipments to Israel, he said, was regrettable but not a disaster; Israel was making advances in some sophisticated weaponry and manufacturing certain types of armaments, he said.

Meanwhile, observers said the most anti-Israel Government in many years was being formed by Mr. Karami in Lebanon. A leftist, he has been Premier six times in the past 24 years and will succeed Abdullah Yafi, who resigned yesterday with his three-month-old Cabinet. The Yafi departure stemmed partly from the inadequate security at the Beirut airport that left it wide open to attack, resulting in the destruction, without loss of life, of 13 commercial aircraft by Israeli commandos.

Israel's Call NBC Report on Nuclear Capability 'Speculative and Inexact'

JERUSALEM, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A National Broadcasting Co. report yesterday that Israel has developed a nuclear bomb or would have one very shortly was not denied categorically here today. Authoritative sources however termed it "speculative and inexact." (The Israel Embassy in Washington denied the report.) They said Israel was not a nuclear state and recalled Israel's past pledge that it would not be the first nation to introduce nuclear weapons to the Middle East.

The NBC report was televised on the "Huntley-Brinkley Report." NBC's State Department correspondent, James Robinson, attributed his purported information to unidentified sources who claimed that American intelligence agents discovered Israeli agents quietly buying special parts and material that could be used only to manufacture nuclear weapons. The NBC report stated further that Israel had started a crash program two years ago to develop nuclear weapons and was working on a delivery system to be ready within three years. (State Department officials discounted the report as totally erroneous. They told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency today that the United States was satisfied that Israel would live up to its pledge not to be the first to bring nuclear weapons into the Middle East.)

Credence was given to the NBC report in some quarters abroad by Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation draft treaty despite heavy pressure from the U.S. Informed circles here said Israel has withheld its signature because the Government was still studying the economic, political, industrial and defense implications of the draft treaty. They pointed out that this was the attitude of many other non-nuclear states.

The NBC report drew some acceptance from the widely acknowledged fact that Israel was one of the four or five non-nuclear countries with the technological capability, if not financial resources, to produce nuclear weapons. NBC cited the latest issue of "Jane's All The World's Aircraft," an authoritative British publication, as saying that Israel would have nuclear warheads of its own design by 1970. Israel has two nuclear research establishments, one at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovoth and the other at Dimona in the Negev Desert. They are believed to be developing nuclear reactors for peaceful purposes. Informants here recalled Prime Minister Levi Eshkol's statement at a Labor Party meeting in Degana last October that Israel has the know-how to manufacture nuclear weapons "but from there to making them is a long way to go."

It was also noted here that Israel does not have the financial resources to produce a nuclear bomb, especially as its treasury is already strained to secure the conventional weapons it needs for defense. The 50 F-4 Phantom jets which the U.S. has just agreed to sell Israel will cost about \$200 million. (Defense authorities in London said today that while Israel had the know-how to produce nuclear weapons, in a "comparatively short time" it was unlikely that they have developed any so far.)

Eshkol Says Old City Jewish Quarter Reconstruction to Cost \$3.5 Million

JERUSALEM, Jan 9 (JTA)--Reconstruction of the old Jewish quarter in East Jerusalem will cost the Israel Government \$3.5 million in the next fiscal year, Prime Minister Levi Eshkol reported in the Knesset (Parliament) yesterday. He said part of the cost includes a sum set aside to evacuate 800 families from the quarter.

Canadian Protestant Church Leader Terms Jews 'Paranoid' on Subject of Israel

TORONTO, Jan 9 (JTA)--The lay leader of Canada's largest Protestant church said in a radio debate here that Canadian Jews were "paranoid" on the subject of Israel and had "split loyalty" on it. Dr. Robert McClure, moderator of the United Church of Canada, spoke in a dialogue with Emil Fackenheim, a Jewish writer and professor of philosophy at Toronto University, which was broadcast live by the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. Dr. McClure, a physician, is titular head of the church.

He maintained that the Jews of Canada wore "three hats"--as Canadian citizens and as Jewish religionists, which posed no problems but in relation to their attitude toward Israel they had a persecution complex and resented any criticism. Prof. Fackenheim replied that in more than 20 years, the Christian community had failed to come to terms with the Nazi holocaust, citing its silence before the June, 1967 war when Arabs were threatening the destruction of all Jews in Israel. He asked Dr. McClure if he felt a "split loyalty between Canada and Christ."

Dr. McClure suggested that Canadian Jews felt obliged to "shout louder" because they had a guilty conscience--they were more comfortable in Canada than are Jews in Israel.

The United Church of Canada is Methodist and Congregationalist and includes a section of Presbyterians. Its official organ, The Observer, is edited by Rev. A.C. Forrest who has been condemned by many Canadian clergymen for anti-Israel pro-Arab bias. It has consistently carried articles unfavorable to Israel.

One of three Protestant church publications in Canada has omitted an indirect slurring reference to American Jews in printing a report by Rev. Forrest on the hardships and deprivations of an Arab Christian refugee family in Bethlehem. Rev. Forrest, who is on a year's Middle East assignment and is based in Beirut, made derogatory references to "fat Florida friends" who disregarded "hunger" in Bethlehem and spoke of "jewelry -hoarders." There was no direct citation of Jews but observers felt the implication was clear. His "Christmas story" appeared in the "Observer" and in the Anglican "Canadian Churchman" and "Presbyterian Record," but the "Record" unlike the other publications, deleted his apparent slurs. In a previous story, Rev. Forrest spoke of living under the "hard Israel yoke."

Whitney Young Warns That Negro Anti-Semitism is Injurious to School Decentralization

NEW YORK, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A Negro civil rights leader warned yesterday that "nothing could be more damaging to the cause" of school decentralization than the anti-Semitic accusations recently made by Negro advocates of that cause. Whitney M. Young Jr., executive director of the National Urban League, one of the staunchest supporters of decentralization and community control of New York City's public school system, said that "religious prejudice has no place among people who have been the victims of racial prejudice...Nothing could confuse the issue more than malicious baiting of teachers or others because of race or religion."

Mr. Young's statement, made on behalf of the Urban League's national board of trustees, was understood to have been prompted by two recent Negro attacks against Jewish teachers and the largely Jewish United Federation of Teachers. One was an editorial in the Afro-American Teachers Forum, a magazine, which asked, "How long shall the black and Puerto Rican communities of New York City sit back and allow the Jewish dominated United Federation of Teachers to destroy our every effort to rescue our children from those incompetent teachers whose only goal--aside from receiving fat pay checks--is stifling our children's intellectual growth?"

The other anti-Jewish attack was made at a Board of Education hearing on school decentralization last Friday by William O. Marley, a member of the Brownsville Model Cities Committee, who charged that "control by this group has been detrimental to black and Puerto Rican children" and responsible for the relatively small number of Negro teachers and administrators in the school system. Mr. Marley did not identify the group but his reference was considered obviously to be to Jewish teachers.

Mr. Young declared that the case for school decentralization was strong enough to stand on its own merits without the injection of irrelevant issues and warned that, "There are racist elements in our society who would dearly love to see Negroes and Jews--New York City's two largest ethnic groups--at each other's throats because this infighting weakens the capacity of both groups to fight the true racists of our society."

UAHC To Publish Books For Youth on Relevance of Judaism to Contemporary World

NEW YORK, Jan. 9, (JTA)--The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the lay representative body of Reform Judaism in America, will attempt to answer the questions of Jewish youth about what relevance their Judaism has to the contemporary world. Rabbi Alexander M. Schindler, vice president of the Union, announced that it is publishing a series of books prepared by leading Jewish scholars that will elucidate what Judaism has to say on such subjects as war, sex and narcotics. Rabbi Schindler said that young Jews frequently ask, "What do I have to believe and to do to be a Jew?" He said that the questions are particularly difficult to answer because in the "free and open society we live in, the line of cultural demarcation...has become blurred." Rabbi Schindler said that values that once were readily identifiable as Jewish are "today part and parcel of general society's constellation of ideas--at least so it seems to our young, and this is why they want to know why they should continue to be practicing and believing Jews today."

Rabbi Schindler said the books will reflect university-linked research and will "bring to bear the resources and will "bring to bear the resources of all academic disciplines which relate to the critical problems of the Jewish community." He said the cost will be defrayed by the Maurice Eisendrath Publication Fund which was established recently by the UAHC's board of trustees to mark Rabbi Eisendrath's 25th anniversary as Union president.

Formula to Preserve Monuments Being Tested in Ancient Cemetery in Curacao

NEW YORK, Jan. 9 (JTA)--A monument-saving formula developed by a Jewish chemistry professor at New York University is being tested as a preservative on tombstones in what is believed to be the oldest Jewish cemetery in the Western Hemisphere, the famous Mikve Israel Cemetery in Curacao, Netherlands West Indies.

Prof. Seymour Z. Lewin, who developed a compound for preserving stone, was invited to Curacao by Congregation Mikve Israel Emmanuel to try to save the markings on the 17th Century tombstones from obliteration. Some of the stones, which have survived since 1620, are endangered by air pollutants from the nearby oil refineries operated by Royal Dutch Shell. Charles Gomez-Cassires, president of the Curacao Jewish community, arranged with the oil company to provide labor and equipment, and a local paint company agreed to manufacture Prof. Lewin's formula on the spot. The compound was painted on the marble grave markers and formed durable crystal which, it was hoped, would arrest the erosion process.

The Mikve Israel cemetery was founded by Portuguese Jews who came to Curacao from Brazil to escape the Inquisition. It is believed to be the oldest Caucasian burial ground in the Western Hemisphere and has become one of Curacao's major tourist attractions.

JDC Names Ralph I. Goldman, Former Cultural Foundation Head, to Malben Post

TEL AVIV, Jan. 9 (JTA)--The Joint Distribution Committee announced the appointment of Ralph I. Goldman, a Boston-born Harvard graduate, as associate director of Malben, the JDC's social welfare agency in Israel that cares for aged immigrants. Mr. Goldman previously headed the American Israel Cultural Foundation and was in charge of the technical assistance department of the Prime Minister's office in Jerusalem. Malben plans to extend its old aged services and expand assistance for the handicapped.