

# U.N. ban of Israel won't solve problems

By ROBERT FRIEDMANN

Last week, in a dense series of events, Israel was disbarred from regional participation in the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (UNESCO). Since it seems that a similar resolution may be accepted at the U.N. General Assembly, I would like to point out some political implications that have been taken for granted in the last few days.

UNESCO was established after World War II ended. Its mother organization, the United Nations, had as its objectives all the nice, too-familiar and impractical cliches of "war prevention" and increase of "understanding among nations." UNESCO's purpose was to help realize U.N. goals by tightening relations among nations in the realms of education, culture and science. Astronomical amounts of money—and, as usual,

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the United States was the main financier—were dedicated to distribute knowledge and moral and material support for the world's cultural heritage.

What happened to these divine objectives? What is going on in UNESCO's glamorous palace in Paris? On the fingers of one hand you can count—during convention times—the intellectuals, writers and scientists. The delegates consist of high officials who are of no use in their own countries, but cannot be disposed of. The scientists who are supported by UNESCO—among them many from this University—work not in conventions but in the field where their help is needed. The delegates of today have nothing to do with science, culture and civilization. When people in their home countries are starving, the delegates live a very expensive lifestyle and spend money on items like fancy cars, clothing and food. They are concerned not with world problems but with a political nuance: their educational task is to live up to the opposite goals that the same

organization set up for itself, and they seek to find "understanding" among nations by disbarring Israel, by accusing her of committing the crime of archaeological excavations in the city of Jerusalem.

Yes, archaeological excavations are an objective of UNESCO—to expose or save the treasures of the past. It was UNESCO which organized the large-scale international effort to save the famous temples of Abu-Simbal in southern Egypt which were in danger of being flooded by the water of the Aswan Dam; millions of dollars were spent in a unique technological project to transfer the temples to a safer location. Even today UNESCO is the financier of many archaeological excavations in Egypt, but the improvement of Jerusalem's (Wailing) Wall area and the exposure of ancient Israel's treasures of culture and art are a good enough reason (although not the real reason) to punish Israel, disbar her from UNESCO and vote for support of the Palestinian

Liberation Organization (PLO). This is the real world theater of the absurd.

Involving international politics in organizations like UNESCO leads to these contradictions. If the free world will remain silent and will not follow the French example of real intellectual protest against such a shameful act, then we can expect **politicide**—the killing of a nation. I am not in favor of counting achievements of nations and weighing them against each other. That is the reason I think that even if Israel were a poor, ignorant and remote nation, it still would have a right to exist (and in that case probably would have much less trouble), so cultural, educational and scientific achievements should not be mentioned. What should be mentioned is that Israel wants a chance to improve things that need improvement and to cope with her social problems and that she can cope with inflation but needs some peace. If the Palestinian problem seeks solution through the destruction of a nation, we won't let it happen. Israel has offered

peace since its establishment and is still offering it. The whole Western world could repeat its mistake of 1936 and believe the aggressor and the blackmailer and its mistake of 1939 when a nation was sacrificed for the "benefit" of the "world" (with a "clean" conscience). The world paid heavily for those mistakes in a long and bloody war with ramifications existing today. Sacrificing Israel will not solve the world's problems but it would certainly serve some interests.

If the West lets Israel down, it will be ultimately letting itself down, too. I am asking you as individuals and groups to join me in protesting this shameful act of UNESCO and prevent a repetition of such an act in the UN.

Yes, Israel needs your help because she cannot stand by herself. Someday, another Western country may find itself in a similar position. It is not terror that we are afraid of; we condemn terror. It is silence of the great majority of people like you and me.