

TO: All Clubs
FROM: National Jewish Commission

THE MORNING FREIHEIT AND THE DEMONSTRATION AT THE ISRAELI U.N. MISSION

(The following is the text of an editorial which appeared in the Morning Freiheit's English pages on December 5, and a reply to it which is to appear in Jewish Affairs.)

THE DEMONSTRATION AT ISRAEL'S U.N. MISSION

(Morning Freiheit Editorial on Nov. 28, 1971)

On Nov. 23, a demonstration took place at the Israeli UN Mission under the sponsorship of an organization that calls itself the "Committee for a Just Peace in the Middle East." The Morning Freiheit published an advertisement for the meeting on Nov. 21 (city edition). Immediately thereafter we received a number of inquiries from readers asking why we published the ad. Some protested in sharp terms.

Our answer is that from time to time we ourselves protest against commercial newspapers that refuse to accept our ads for a progressive affair. All arguments that the newspaper bears no responsibility, political or ideological for an ad, are of no avail. Commercial newspapers practice discrimination and it is clear that we cannot adopt such methods.

Only recently there was the case of an ad for Angela Davis, which the progressive Jewish leadership, including the Morning Freiheit, had inserted (Sept. 17) in Congress Bi-Weekly, the organ of the American Jewish Congress. On Oct. 29 that publication had an editorial replying to some of its readers who had protested the acceptance of the ad. The editorial explained that censorship of an ad for which the magazine is politically and ideologically not responsible, is a serious matter. The editorial said the ad was printed because Congress Bi-Weekly opposes such censorship.

This should suffice as an answer to those who made inquiries or protested our printing the ad of the "Committee for a Just Peace in the Middle East." We certainly will not censor an ad of a progressive organization, even if we do not agree with its stand on a particular serious problem.

Why are we in disagreement with the "Committee"? This requires clarification. We refrained from expressing our opinion prior to the demonstration. Now, however, we believe it is necessary to give reasons for our position, not only to avoid misunderstandings, but for the sake of clarity--as we see it--in a very important matter

PROGRESSIVE JEWS LEAD FIGHT AGAINST JDL

1. A determined struggle must be waged against the "Jewish Defense League!" And no one does it more resolutely and consistently than the Morning Freiheit. Testifying to this are the truly countless editorials and articles in our paper (and they will continue to appear). Testifying to this was also the big Olgin meeting attended by over 1200 at Town Hall, Nov. 20, where a stormy demonstration against the JDL took place. At the Olgin mass meetings in Philadelphia, Chicago, Newark, Patterson, and at the meetings that will be held in Boston, Los Angeles, Miami and other cities --everywhere there will be demonstrations against the JDL. The leadership of the Jewish Cultural Clubs and Societies has condemned the "League" in a special statement. Other Jewish progressive organizations have also come out against the JDL and will continue to oppose its activities. This is an unceasing struggle in which the Morning Freiheit plays a major role.

JDL ISOLATED IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

In this struggle, as we have indicated on numerous occasions, Jewish leaders here, as well as in Israel, have come out against the "League". It should therefore always be stressed that the JDL is isolated. It is necessary to fight against the JDL and not against others. However, when a demonstration is staged against the JDL, not in front of its headquarters (if this is possible but in front of the Israeli UN Mission, one presents the JDL with partners.

The result is that the Israeli Mission is indicted along with the JDL.

The "Jewish Defense League" was born in America. It is here, in our country, that it perpetrates and continues to perpetrate its shameful deeds, such as the firing of shots into a room in the Soviet UN building where children were sleeping. It is here, in our country, that the JDL is enabled to amass arms and ammunition and is protected by the police and the courts. Thus, demonstrations by Americans against the JDL must be conducted in front of U.S. government institutions. It should be demanded of Washington and of City Hall in New York that they take measures against the hoodlums of JDL. But to mobilize people in our country, Jews and non-Jews, to demonstrate against the JDL at the headquarters of the Israeli UN Mission and to demand that Israel should move against the JDL--such a tactic is seriously to be questioned.

2. While the propaganda at the demonstration stressed the emotional element--the indignation engendered by the shots fired at the Soviet UN Mission--one of the main slogans was peace in the Middle East. Such a struggle must, in our view, be conducted in such a way that broad masses of American Jews can be mobilized for that purpose. The government of Israel pays a great deal of attention to the sentiments of the American Jewish community, and if it were possible to create here a broad democratic front for peace based on the UN resolution of Nov. 22, 1967, it would have an effect. However, to raise the slogan of "Israeli aggression," as was done by the forementioned "Committee", is to destroy the possibility of organizing such a broad front. One should have as one's goal not simply a protest of several hundred Jews and non-Jews, but a wide mobilization of large masses, especially Jews, in the struggle against chauvinism and annexation and for the existence of the state of Israel.

3. Among Jewish people, questions might be raised as to why the protests should be voiced only at the Israeli UN Mission. Why, for instance, were there no demonstrations at the Iraqi Mission, when Jews and others were being publicly hanged there, or at the Sudanese Mission, during the bloody terror in that country, when the top leaders of the trade unions and the Communist Party were killed, or at the Syrian Mission, protesting the persecution of the Syrian Jews. Syria and Iraq not only have not recognized the UN resolution but to this day they call for the destruction of Israel. One-sidedness can only damage the struggle for a just peace in the Middle East.

4. The progressive Jewish movement had a sad experience in 1929, during the unrest in Palestine. Because we pursued a wrong tactic, progressive Jews sustained severe setbacks. Later, we criticized ourselves for the blunder. But rather than criticize one's self after the fact, when the damage has been done, it is much wiser not to commit the error. To repeat approximately the mistakes made in 1929, with fatal consequences for the Jewish--as well as the non-Jewish --progressive movement, for the progressive Jewish mass organizations, institutions, cultural centers, etc. would be both false in principle--for our stand on the Six Day War is known-- as well as tactically criminal. Others may not know of the experience of 1929 or do not want to know. But those who bear the responsibility for the Jewish progressive movement, for the Morning Freiheit, must always remember that experience.

For all of the foregoing reasons we could not and dared not approve the demonstration at the Israeli UN Mission with the slogans that it advanced.