

Musicians 'Scream' at UNESCO

By LINDSAY MILLER

The musical greats had not gathered at Carnegie Hall to make music.

Instead, Arthur Rubinstein, Isaac Stern, Leonard Bernstein and Pierre Boulez all appeared on the Carnegie stage yesterday "to scream," as Bernstein put it, about the ouster of Israel from active participation in the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Last month, the 135-member General Conference of UNESCO adopted a proposal by the Arab bloc, backed by Communist and African delegates, to cut Israel from UNESCO funds and to exclude Israel from any of UNESCO's regional groupings.

"This wretched decision was taken without any semblance of debate. It was railroaded through," said Bernstein, noting that UNESCO was created to promote cultural communication among nations, not to get involved in politics.

Bernstein said he was very concerned that this action by UNESCO might be a "harbinger of worse things to come."

"It always starts with a capital-K cultural act and ends with a capital-H Holocaust. God forbid," said Bernstein, alluding to the ban imposed by the Nazis on Jewish "Kultur" in the late '30s.

With his hands folded tensely across his chest, Bernstein read a list of 75 eminent musicians and dancers who were joining the protest against UNESCO's action.

About 30 of these—ranging from dancer Alvin Ailey to pianist Byron Janis to conductor Michael Tilson Thomas—were there yesterday to sign a letter being sent to the director general of UNESCO in Paris.

Their signatures, each as bold and distinctive as John Hancock's on the Declaration of Independence, filled three sheets.

New York Philharmonic conductor Boulez read their letter aloud, accusing the UNESCO General Conference of acting as "a political tool, thus ignoring its professed aim of promoting the rule of law."

The signers of the letter said they would refuse to participate in and disassociated themselves from any activities of UNESCO. They said their withdrawal would continue "until UNESCO rescinds its politicizing resolutions directed against Israel."

Arthur Rubinstein, who first performed in Carnegie Hall in 1906, said he had urged the French Academy of Beaux Arts, of which he is a member, to censure UNESCO. "My stay in Paris was poisoned by this thing," he said.