

WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS IN PALESTINE

The Tension in the Yishuv

From A Special Correspondent with the South African Tourists

Tiberias, March 8th.

ON Saturday morning the South African tourists were about to visit the famous Wailing Wall when the news came that a Jew had been shot near the spot only an hour previously. The report distressed and saddened us all, and we spent the morning walking about the city.

There was excitement and fear in the air, which grew more tense in the afternoon when two Arabs were shot near Merchavia—a new Jewish suburb. This caused great activity on the part of the police and military. Meanwhile thousands of Jews had gathered outside the Hadassah Hospital awaiting news of the wounded Jew, upon whom an operation was being performed.

Towards dusk on Saturday afternoon warning of curfew came, and the crowds of various types of Jews usually seen on the Jaffa road gradually dispersed. No person was to be seen on the streets from nine o'clock in the evening until dawn of the following day, and the South Africans had their first taste of what the residents of Jerusalem had known for months. We were forced to give up the various engagements we had made for the evening.

A Tour of the Emek

Next morning it was announced that the tour of the Emek (to which we had all eagerly looked forward) would not begin until it had been ascertained that the journey through Arab villages would be safe. Whilst the Jews in Jerusalem went on quietly with their daily tasks, showing the fine courage that is to be seen all over the Yishuv, the majority of the South African tourists were definitely frightened, and made hurried arrangements to get back to Tel-Aviv.

The small group of tourists which eventually set out was favoured with glorious weather. Daily singing Hebrew songs, in which our chauffeurs joined, we travelled along the Jerusalem-Haifa road, occasionally coming across some stray Arabs. Not so very long ago, our guide told us, it took three days on horse and waggon to go from Jerusalem to Haifa. To-day it was a matter of three hours by car.

On the way we passed through some prosperous-looking Arab villages and we stopped to gaze for a moment at the historic "Jacob's Well." As we neared Nablus, we saw Gerizim on our left. Passing through some beautiful scenery, we came to the Arab town of Gineen, after which we came upon the Valley of Jezreel, more popularly known as the Emek. Here we saw prosperous Jewish settlements on land which 15

years ago was malaria-ridden swamp. To-day the Emek is the most fertile land in Palestine—an agricultural paradise.

With hearts filled with a strange pride, we rode into Afuleh, and after greeting the workers there, we lunched at the hotel. Afuleh is the central point of the Emek and is likely to grow into a city of importance as the land settlements develop on all sides.

We drove out to Tel-Amal, situated on the high green plains of Lower Galilee, and we were taken over the Kadoorie Agricultural School, where we found a young South African among the students. He is Herzl Genussow—son of the veteran Zionist.

We then motored through the lovely Jordan valley, with the Syrian mountains seen in the distance, and gradually came to the ancient Sea of Galilee (Yam Kinereth) and thus entered Tiberias. We walked along the beach and later visited the health springs. This natural hot water coming down the mountain side is a great wonder and in time thousands of tourists on annual health pilgrimages should be attracted to the springs.

After chatting with the guide on the things seen during the day, and tired by the long excursion, we retired to our rooms in the Guberman Hotel, all determined to rise early for a hot bath in the Tiberias Springs the next day.

An Arab Attack

Whilst the tourists were getting ready to rest for the night, I decided to walk out into the town, my purpose being to visit a certain married couple, who had some years previously been residents of Capetown. After ten minutes' walk, I reached their home and was most cordially received. I had hoped to spend about half an hour with them and then proceed to the Hotel Elizabeth where another two old South African friends are staying.

I was just about to leave when two shots shattered the stillness of the night. Doors were quickly closed and bolted. Then two more shots were heard and soon a woman's scream. My host courageously unbolted the door and went out bringing into the house three people, two men and a woman. The latter was in a fainting condition. They had all three been running away from Arabs, who had fired on them. After the woman had been calmed we found out that she was a Canadian Jewess from Winnipeg. One of the gentlemen was her husband and the other their guide and chauffeur who had been showing them round the town. As I had lived in Winnipeg some years ago, I asked

about some people there and we found that we had some mutual friends. It was a strange meeting. Finally the chauffeur faced the danger and went out to fetch his car. I was warned of the danger of going to the Hotel Elizabeth to see my friends, and the chauffeur, after taking his passengers to the Hotel Europe, took me back to the Guberman Hotel. Meanwhile my friend had become anxious about me, and managed finally to get a military escort

in order to visit me. The sergeant who brought them was from the Hampshire Regiment, and he frankly admitted to me that the "Tommies" had orders never to shoot at but over an Arab. The soldiers were all fed up, he said. "If we were permitted to go for the murderers (Arabs) we'd get them alright. But we've been told not to."

It is true that our sergeant had previously had a drink or two at the Officers' Mess, but he knew what he was talking about. For this order of "Not to shoot" is believed by many in the Yishuv to be the root of the Arab daring and readiness to kill, rob, and plunder. Unless British policy changes—and does so quickly—Jewish Palestine is in mortal danger of continued, unprovoked attacks by terrorists.

ZIONISM—1937 AND ON

(Concluded from page 7).

fault, partly ours. A leading Zionist once made the extraordinary statement: "Our relations with the Arabs are a function of our relations with the British." This was the essence of superficial *Realpolitik*. Our relations with the Arabs should be intrinsic, and not a dependent variable. Because we have not tried to make them intrinsic we have fortified in Palestine the most unfortunate aspect of British colonial administration.

To return to the question of the *quid pro quo*: It will be argued that Jews are no longer in a position to offer, as their contribution in a bargain with England, the influence which they possessed in 1917. Russian Jewry no longer counts in this field. The intensification of anti-Semitism in other countries has absorbed so much of the strength of the Jews that they cannot be of the same service as 20 years ago. But while this may seem to change the situation for the worse, the following factors are really more decisive:

In 1917 world Jewry had not the stake in Palestine which it has to-day and therefore its response was, though not negligible, diffuse. Moreover, a negative act, such as the immobilisation of the Jewish Homeland, will call forth a much more violent reaction than an affirmative act did 20 years ago. As contrasted with the sentimental interest (such it largely was) with which Palestine was regarded by Jewry then, there is to-day a fearful and practical call from many countries, among which Poland has the mournful pre-eminence in volume and Germany in intensity.

But perhaps the most important individual factor which restores, and more than restores, the influence of 1917, is the re-emergence of America to the strategic moral position which it occupied during the World War and lost with the depression and the lapse of the debts. American Jewry, an important element in this factor, will again play the historic role which was hers in 1917. What applied then to the value of the good offices of American Jewry will apply now in greater measure, for here as elsewhere, the interest in the Jewish Homeland has become real, practical and unopposed where it was once theoretical sentimental and divided. That influence must be used now for the promotion of an intelligent relationship to England in regard to the Jewish Homeland, a relationship in which Palestine is not regarded as a place where the Jews can render service to the fortification of the British Empire, but as the locale in which the Jewish Homeland is to be integrated with the life of the Arab people.

Courtesy "New Palestine."

PLAZA THEATRE ATTRACTIONS.

After the run of "Earthworm Tractors," the delightful comedy featuring Joe E. Brown, the attraction at the Plaza Theatre will be the re-issue of "King of Jazz." This picture first made an appearance about five years ago, and now Johannesburg audiences will again be able to hear Paul Whiteman and his band playing "Rhapsody in Blue" and John Boles singing "It Happened in Monterey" and "Song of the Dawn." The programme supporting "King of Jazz" is an attractive one.