

TO THE JEWS OF SOUTH AFRICA

An Urgent Call.

The plight of Jewry to-day is a blot on civilisation. In the world's interest no less than our own, this cannot continue. There must be an end of Jewish homelessness. Palestine must be established as a Jewish Commonwealth. We must strengthen the hands of our leaders in their demands that justice be done. The united voice of the Jewish people must break through the wall of silence.

Towards this end we summon South African Jewry to a plebiscite on March 21st in which every Jew and Jewess over the age of eighteen years will be asked to pledge support for the following demands:—

1. That in view of the tragic and overwhelming need for Jewish emigration from Nazi-occupied countries the gates of Palestine

be opened immediately and that the restrictions imposed by the White Paper be annulled.

2. That a distinct Jewish army be formed, the nucleus of which already exists in the thousands of Jews recruited from Palestine and so enable the Jewish people to participate in the war as a member of the United Nations.
3. That Palestine be established as a Jewish Commonwealth integrated into the democratic structure of the post-war world.

Sunday, March 21st, is Shekel Day. The Shekel is the badge of Zionist membership. We call upon every Jew and Jewess on that day to sign the Declaration and to take the Shekel.

**The Executive Council of the
South African Zionist Federation.**

Johannesburg, 10th March, 1943.

Zionist Conversazione.

ADDRESS BY Mr. JACK ALEXANDER.

At the Zionist Conversazione at the Zionist Hall on Tuesday night, Mr. Jack Alexander, Secretary, S.A. Zionist Federation, delivered an interesting address on "The Jewish Scene here and Overseas."

Mr. J. M. Weinreich was in the chair.

Mr. Alexander said that he did not consider the war as Armageddon; the world had been in a state of maladjustment for the last fifty years and the state of unstable equilibrium would last still for a considerable time, until the emergence of the new lines along which humanity was to be served. The future destiny of the whole world depended on the success of the forces of liberty in this war, and this applied particularly to the Jews, who had a special interest in seeing that a state of affairs was brought about which would at least give them a guarantee of existence. From this point of view, said Mr. Alexander, it seemed to him that the Jews were not pulling their full weight in the war. The Jews had a greater stake and more to lose than any other people, and in the psychological and moral sense at any rate they were not doing as much as they should. There was too much carping criticism which was calculated to depress and not to inspire.

There was little in the Jewish position to-day, said Mr. Alexander, to give us cause for satisfaction. In the United Nations' attitude towards the Nazi policy of extermination, performance lagged behind promise. Action must be taken now if Jews were to be saved

and there was little sign of any real move. Even in North Africa the Allies had not influenced the putting into force of a more liberal policy. Jews must persist in their agitation to secure even a modicum of the principles for which this war was being fought.

As regards post-war policy, said Mr. Alexander, there was need for a clear-cut programme, based on a united conviction and pursued with determination and wise statesmanship. No time must be lost in taking whatever measures were possible for framing post-war policy. It was our duty to keep the mind of the world focussed on the Jewish issue. The Biltmore programme was the chief focal point of the post-war world for Jews. A twin aim was that of equal rights for Jews in the Diaspora. Palestine was the centre of the Jewish scene and everything else was periphery. Palestine offered stability and security to our scheme of things. Large sections of people threw emphasis on Galuth policy for many reasons and due chiefly to confused thinking. Palestine was the corner-stone of post-war aims and the key of long-range policy. Anti-Zionist tendencies had recently raised their head in America and England. Though the sponsors were a small minority, this indicated a cleavage in Jewish opinion which was not conducive to that unity of utterance so essential in placing our case before the world. Little was being said about territorialism to-day, but those in favour were by no means idle. All things taken together showed we had not yet learnt from the lessons of the past the importance of composing the differences in our points of view.

All must have been impressed said Mr. Alexander with the increasing primacy of Palestine as the leader of world Jewry. Zionists had always realised that this would come

about. The Yishuv had been the first to rouse the conscience of the world to the plight of Jews in Europe. Palestine had become the country of Jewish refuge, the one beacon of light for the Jews of Europe. The Jewish units had served as a model and inspiration to the Jews throughout the world. The effect on world public opinion through thousand of soldiers who had visited Palestine and seen what Jews could do for themselves was tremendous. Palestine was not only setting a standard for Jewry but was changing the erroneous ideas about Jews which the world had absorbed.

Dealing with conditions in South Africa, Mr. Alexander said that in war work Jews were doing their fair share. There was, however, too much unhealthy criticism. There was a tendency for over-glorification of Russia's effort and a distorted and one-sided view was being cultivated. There was a constant belittling of what the Allies were doing, often with their backs to the wall; this was an unsound attitude and one calculated to weaken the morale and give a twisted perspective of the world scene.

The anti-Semitic drum in South Africa was rumbling again in and out of Parliament, but this did not impinge on the Jewish consciousness to the same extent as before the war. It was gratifying that the Goodwill effort was being persevered in by men of humanity and liberal thought.

Mr. Alexander touched on other matters affecting South African Jewry, and concluded with a special appeal for the utmost support of the forthcoming J.N.F. Campaign, the results of which, he hoped, would transcend anything previously achieved.

During the evening Miss E. Stein rendered a pianoforte solo and Miss Tobias a song.

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