

Visitors' Reception at Muizenberg.

Address by Dr. Bernard Friedman, M.P.

The Muizenberg Pavilion, its gallery and bays, were filled to capacity at a Reception given to Zionists visiting the Peninsula on Tuesday evening, 30th January, under the auspices of the Western Province Zionist Council.

Mr. H. M. Bloch, K.C., who was in the chair, welcomed the large number of visitors. He felt that the large attendance was a sign that the Jewish community of South Africa was waking up to realities and hoped that the time would soon come when the Zionist movement would have the whole community solidly behind it.

An interesting programme of entertainment was provided by Cantor M. Katzin, Mr. G. Laden and Miss Billie Jones.

After the tea interval Dr. Bernard Friedman, M.P., the guest speaker, delivered an address on "Jewish Reconstruction." Dr. Friedman said that the war was rapidly moving to a final culmination and the world would soon be celebrating victory—a victory which would remove the blackest form of reaction. The Jewish people through its glorious Brigade would also march side by side with the other armies carrying its colours to a victorious end. The Jews had previously fought anonymously in the Allied armies. They defended themselves heroically in the Warsaw Ghetto Battle, with greater courage than their oppressors, the Germans, had shown in Stalingrad and Tunisia. The Warsaw Ghetto Battle was in effect a moral victory over Nazi barbarity. The Jewish Brigade was imbued with the same spirit and it would acquit itself in a manner befitting the honour of the Jewish people. The Brigade would receive the victory salute on behalf of the whole of the Jewish people when victory came.

The speaker did not doubt that the Peace Conference would endeavour to solve the Jewish problem which had assumed enormous dimensions. Hitler had thrust the Jewish people into the forefront much beyond its merit. The Jewish people was well aware that it did not possess those sinister powers which Nazi mythology had ascribed to it. Hitler had taught the nations a lesson that reactionary forces ever utilise anti-semitism as an instrument against progress. The ruling classes who would not on their own connive at their own destruction, would doubtlessly use anti-semitism to keep their power. The solution to the Jewish problem, therefore, was a most necessary prerequisite of a successful social reconstruction. The more successfully the progressive forces would allow their influence to bear upon the Peace Conference, the more successful would be the solution of the Jewish problem.

ZIONISM ONLY SOLUTION.

Zionism was the only total solution to the Jewish problem. Zionism meant a Jewish Commonwealth in the whole of Palestine. Jewish reconstruction, however, had to begin at once. It could not wait for the slow and laborious process of a Peace Conference. The rehabilitation of the Jews of Europe was an enormous and immediate task. It was impossible to piece together even an approximate picture of what had occurred in

Europe. The Nazis had even in the moment of defeat sought to carry out one of their nefarious aims—the total slaughter of the Jewish people. Two or three million Jews, however, would survive and the scale of reconstruction had to be planned accordingly. The Jewish people in Europe had been forced into foul occupations and social conditions and Unrra would have to deal with deranged and dehumanised remnants of European Jewry; human beings in whom only the animal instinct of fear had survived. They (the Jews) would not be able to regain confidence, security and dignity in their country of origin. There was only one place in which total rehabilitation was possible. Only the Yishuv was prepared to receive them with open arms.

Even institutions that did not accept Zionist ideology such as the Joint Distribution Committee of America and the War Appeal had to accept the fact that their approach to relief work was far too simple. Relief was not an end in itself. Responsibility only ended when the people that were cared for were able to fend for themselves. The Jews had not only to concern themselves with relief but with rehabilitation. Quoting the example of Poland as the largest centre of Jewish diaspora settlement, Dr. Friedman pointed out that the position of the Poles in post-war reconstruction was far less complicated than that of the Jews. The Jews had only rights on paper. The Jew indeed had to assert his claim to his rights. But in reality he would have to face up to the stern facts. The Jews belong to the middle class. In a social revolution he would be unable to find his niche in the economic structure. If Poland returned to the status quo Jews would fare no better. Poland might find itself unable to absorb the Jews. She would probably exert pressure on the Powers to open the doors of Palestine. As responsible Zionists they could not countenance Polish intervention on these terms. By such action they might endanger the position of Jews all over the diaspora. It was a dangerous illusion to suppose that help might be expected from a reactionary Poland.

The Jewish basis of existence in Europe had completely collapsed. A new basis could only be found in Palestine. As victory was coming nearer the Jews realised that retribution was not sufficient. The speaker hoped that victory would open up a happier future for the Jewish people. For a great many Jews victory would come too late. For the survivors the future was grim and obscure. The Peace Conference had to plan the building of a just and righteous social order in which the Jews could find a safe and congenial place. The Jews, however, had no power to shape the things to come. They could not, however, resign themselves to a passive role and mood of hopelessness and defeatism, but had to concentrate with redoubled efforts on tasks within their grasp—the rebuilding of Palestine. Zionism offered a field of activity in which every Jew had an opportunity of contributing his own share to the reconstruction of the Jewish people.

Ussishkin Memorial Fund

Leading Johannesburg Zionist workers the guests of Mr. Bernard Gering at a luncheon rally in the Coronation Hall February to be addressed by Mr. N. K. Mr. J. Janower and Mr. B. Gering.

In Pretoria the Committee of the Society, at a meeting addressed by Mr. J. decided to launch its campaign early in A good start has been made by the G. Zionist Society at a Committee meeting by Mr. Janower; the campaign is proceeding.

Durban has already made a fine start a contribution. The Natal Zionist Council appointed a Ussishkin sub-committee under chairmanship of Mr. A. Kaplan and is an all-out effort. Arrangements for the drive will be discussed this week at a meeting of the Committee of the East London Society.

The Witbank Hebrew Order of David is to be named "Menachem Mendel Ussishkin" at a ceremony on 4th March to be by orders of the Grand Lodge. The drive will be launched at a meeting of the community to be addressed by Mr. J. D. February 4th. In Middelburg (Transvaal) a campaign will be launched on 6th February with a special contribution from the Potchefstroom community was announced at a Committee meeting of the Zionist Society; arrangements are being made for completing the drive.

Palestine Symphony Orchestra, Cape Town

The Committee were At Home to members and friends to meet Miss Ella Goldstein, her parents, Professor and Mrs. Goldstein, at a sherry party in the Zionist Hall on Thursday 25th January.

Mr. B. Canin was in the chair and introduced the guests. The Palestine Orchestra, he said, was playing an enormous part in the cultural and spiritual life of Eretz Israel in addition to its other activities, has introduced Jewish national music to the audiences which it drew. It was the result of all musical education and exerted a powerful influence.

The Orchestra, however, which consists of refugee musicians, was not self-sufficient and had to be assisted financially. The Cape Town Branch of the Palestine Symphony Orchestra had been established by the late Brekisch during his last visit to South Africa. The assistance given thus far, however, was not sufficient; every Jew should consider it a privilege to support the Orchestra while fulfilling such an important function.

Miss Ella Goldstein, in a short speech, spoke of the excellence of the Palestine Orchestra with which she had been fortunate to play on a number of occasions. A member of the Orchestra was a school-leaver who hoped the Orchestra would one day visit South Africa.

Prof. Goldstein, speaking in Russian and interpreted by Mr. Canin, said that the Palestine Orchestra was providing the highest standard for the people of the time, and was helping to raise the standard of musical education. He felt that it was due, was very far sighted when he saw its cultural possibilities. Prof. Goldstein thanked the Cape Town Branch of the Palestine Symphony Orchestra for their support.

Mr. L. Schach moved a vote of thanks to the guests.

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