

S.A. Youth Bring New Life To Negev

By EFRAIM SWARZSCHILD

(of Kibbutz Elat, formerly from Bulawayo)

JUST before Rosh Hashona we were visited by members of the Jewish Agency. They wished to know whether we could send 30 people and equipment to Ruhama for Hetachzuth. Although we foresaw the many difficulties, we joyfully accepted.

That night we held a mesibah to celebrate the acquisition of a new motor-truck. All were in high spirits in prospect of the new venture. The same night plans were laid, instructions given, and equipment checked. No one knew what was to be our fate the next morning. Would there be interference from the Government? and a second Biryah? How would the Arabs react? Perhaps we would be heading straight for Latrun. . . .

Within a short time huge bonfires are lit to celebrate the event. There are songs, speeches and dances which continue until nearly daybreak.

These are our plans for the operation. Four lorries are to be sent in the first "wave." If we do not succeed a second convoy, carrying the bulk of the equipment, are to try again. Soon the motors are spluttering. There is a last minute check-up, and soon we are on our way.

I am sitting on the hood of the last lorry. Suddenly a small hill hoves into sight. It is nearly daylight as we make the steep ascent to the spot which is to be our destination. The hill is already a beehive of activity. Within five minutes the first tent is pitched and Hadassah and Sharonah are busy in the improvised kitchen. The Chaverim set about their tasks with a will. Some are erecting the first fence posts, others are unloading lorries. The foundations of the first Tzriff are being laid. There is terrific tension. Soon the first room is completed, still roofless, but able to provide shelter for the night.

Suddenly everyone is startled. A police van is coming up the hill. A police officer steps out and walks up to a gaffir. He had come to investigate, after receiving a wireless message from the desert police. Over a cup of tea and sandwiches the venture is explained to him.

"How many gaffirim have you?" he asks.

"Four," we reply.

"Do you think they are sufficient?"

"Yes, quite."

In the meantime there is no slackening in the work. With a big cloud of dust trailing behind him, Chona drives up in a tender. He has come from Bir Mansur where, he reports, the work is progressing well. Shortly afterwards our second convoy arrives. The first tzriff has been completed and the fence is going up.

A few Arabs pass by and stop for a friendly talk. At dusk the big Tzriff, comprising a dining-room and kitchen, is ready, and we are served with a first-class dinner. By 10 o'clock lights are out, and soon everybody is fast asleep, except the guards who are doing their rounds.

At dawn the next morning we are back at our tasks. During the day we receive many visitors from various institutions who bring us the news that the ten other new units have done their tasks as well as we did. By

3 o'clock in the afternoon all the rough work is behind us. The roofs and porches have been erected, doors and windows fitted, and the outer fence completed.

Chaverim from the surrounding kibbutzim who had come to help us, return to their homes. There follows a brief but impressive ceremony as the new settlement is officially opened. Standing in an open rectangle we face the red-blue-and-white flags. Slowly they are raised and unfurled for the first time in Bir Zaballa. The Techazaknah is sung. Everyone feels the greatness of the moment. We shall remember it all our lives.

We had come to create, to bring life to the barren hills stretching all around us. Looking south we can see the sun shining on the hills of Bir Mansur, another link in the chain we have helped to form. Hadassah spoke in the name of the kibbutz, crisp and to the point. Sharonah read the foundation scroll.

The Internationale and Hatikvah are lustily sung—we dance the first hora on our own land.

Congress Delegation Welcomed at Salisbury

IN a message from Salisbury on Wednesday afternoon, Mr. C. Gershater, special representative of the "Zionist Record" travelling with the South African Zionist delegation to Congress, describes the departure of the party from the Germiston aerodrome. He says:

"Despite the early hour (3 a.m.), many friends, as well as members of the Chalutz farm near Germiston, came to the aerodrome to see us off. As the plane left the airport at dawn all sang the 'Hatikvah.'

"At Salisbury the delegation was met by committee members of Zionist societies. These included: Mr. S. Lasovsky, of the Rhodesian Zionist Council; Mr. A. Lessem, Zionist Society; Mesdames E. Gelfand, R. Anolick, B. Jones, R. Konviser, H. Galante, all of Wizo; Rabbi Papo, S. N. Alhadeff and J. N. Alhadeff, of

Successful Concert By Youth Orchestra

A fine tribute to the Youth Orchestra of the Jewish Musical Institute was the appearance at its second concert last Saturday night, at the Selborne Hall, of Mr. Albert Coates, the well-known conductor, and Mr. John Connell, Musical Director of Johannesburg.

The Orchestra, under the able baton of Mr. Solly Aronowsky, Musical Director and Conductor, excelled itself in the overture "Poet and Peasant" (Suppe), and also in the rendering of Palestinian melodies.

Max and Phil Badash were heard to advantage in a number of Hebrew and Yiddish songs, especially the beautiful "Leilot Kaijz" arranged by Solly Aronowsky. Doreen Lotzof gave a most sympathetic rendering of a few arias from "Madame Butterfly," Abe Eidelman played a violin solo and also appeared in a duet with David Golante. Chopin's Fantasia Op. 49 was beautifully interpreted on the piano by Ivan Melman. The accompanists were Hannah Gill, L. Riskowitz and D. Mendelson.

Mr. Infeld, Chairman of the Committee of the Institute, welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Coates and Mr. Connell. He also thanked the organisers, the founders of the Institute, Mr. Solly Aronowsky and Z. Engel, as well as all others who had helped to make the concert a success.



Mrs. J. L. Zlotnik

Progress of Women's Mizrachi Organisation

The annual general meeting of the Johannesburg Branch of the S.A. Women's Mizrachi Organisation was held on November 13 at the Coronation Hall. A large and representative gathering was present, over which Mrs. J. L. Zlotnik presided.

Mrs. Mizrachi, in her report, dealt with some of the activities of the Organisation. She mentioned the building of a Kindergarten in Fetach Tikvah for refugee children; the erection of a study for religious writers and scholars in the Convalescent Home at Kfar Etzion, called "Nevei Ovadiah"; the building of a library in "Beth Avraham," a scheme undertaken by the Hapoel Hamizrachi Organisation of South Africa in memory of one of their chaverim, Abraham Katz, who fell at Hanita in 1938; the planting of 1,000 trees in memory of the late Beila Berlin, wife of Rabbi Meir Berlin, etc.

Mrs. M. E. Holtz, the Honorary Treasurer, presented the financial report, and Mrs. M. Sokolowsky, Honorary Secretary of the Doornfontein Branch, read the Branch report in Yiddish.

The following office-bearers were elected: Chairman, Mrs. J. L. Zlotnik; Vice-Chairmen, Mesdames J. Ben, A. L. Kaplan and L. Rade; Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. M. E. Holtz; Hon. Secretary, Mrs. A. Broide; Central Committee, Mesdames O. Altshuler, Berman, Druian, L. Fisher, G. Fluxman, M. Greisman, Hersch, R. Kaplan, M. Kirson, Z. Koseff, S. Kretzmer, Laim, L. Mayer, B. Rabinowitz, L. Ratner, J. Ostroff, J. Sack, M. Sarovitch, Shenker, M. Sokolowsky, A. Tubianski and L. Zway.

Mrs. A. Broide, Hon. Secretary of the Executive, outlined the facilities which "Our Future," the organ of the Mizrachi Organisation, offered for activities of the Mizrachi.

Mrs. L. Rade, Chairman of the Doornfontein Branch, proposed that Mrs. Zlotnik be inscribed in the Golden Book in appreciation of outstanding services rendered. This was greeted with acclamation.

On the proposal of Mrs. Rabinowitz it was resolved that Mrs. A. Tubianski, Chairman of the Northern Branch, be made an Honorary Member of the Executive.

Mrs. A. L. Kaplan, Chairman of the Southern Suburbs Branch, paid warm tribute to the work of Mrs. Zlotnik, and Mrs. J. Ostroff, Hon. Treasurer of the Southern Suburbs Branch, proposed the vote of thanks.

The Southern Suburbs Branch acted as hostess at this meeting.

Youth Camp at Vereeniging

Between December 25 and 29 a Zionist Socialist Youth Camp is to take place in Vereeniging. About 100 people are expected to participate and extensive plans are being made for an enjoyable week-end.



Representatives to Zionist Congress photographed at a farewell party.