

# THE ZIONIST RECORD

## THE ORGAN OF SOUTH AFRICAN JEWRY

PERMANENT BUILDINGS, CORNER COMMISSIONER AND SIMMONDS STREETS, JOHANNESBURG.

P.O. Box 150. 'Phones 34-1931/2. Telegrams: "Kadimah."

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1946

## Our National Assembly

ON Monday, December 9, the 22nd Zionist Congress will meet at Basle. Nearly 50 years ago at the Casino of the same town, Dr. Herzl proclaimed the idea of the Jewish State and issued a call to the Jewish people to mobilise its resources for the realisation of this idea. Since that first Congress in 1897 the Jewish world has undergone revolutionary changes, but basically the fate of the Jewish people has remained the same. The events of the intervening years have but accentuated the critical position of the Jews among the nations and furnished irrefutable proofs of the soundness of Herzl's analysis and prognosis. Five decades ago Herzl's warnings remained almost unheeded. In those days the founder of the World Zionist Organisation was jeered when he predicted the future of the Jewish people in the Diaspora and spoke of a Jewish State as an imperative necessity for the physical survival of our people.

In his diary, Herzl made the following most significant entry, dated September 3, 1895:

"Any improvement in the Jewish position is excluded. If anyone asks me how I know this I'll tell him that I also know where a stone that rolls over a steep cliff comes to rest, that is, all the way down. Only ignoramuses or lunatics do not take natural laws into account.

"So we Jews, too, must go down, all the way down. Exactly how that will happen, what form it will take, I have no idea. Will it be revolutionary expropriation from below, or will it be reactionary confiscation from above? Will they drive us out? Will they kill us?"

"I suppose more or less that it will take all these and other forms besides. . . ."

To avert the danger of this tragedy Herzl sacrificed the last years of his life, preaching and fighting against both internal and external opponents, but in vain. But the tragedy did happen—European Jewry has been overwhelmed by a storm of bestial terror and has been almost completely destroyed.

The last Zionist Congress of 1939 was held six years after Hitler had declared war on Jewry and just before the outbreak of the Second World War. The 22nd Zionist Congress will meet many months after the full tragedy of European Jewry has been revealed, and at a time when the Zionist Movement has reached the most critical stage in its struggle for the final solution of the problem of Jewish homelessness. The delegates will, we trust, be conscious of the seriousness and gravity of the present situation and be guided by the same vision and determination that characterised Herzl's Zionist enterprise.

To-day our leaders assembled at Basle need not be afraid of adverse reaction on the part of the Jewish public. Fifty years ago Zionists represented but a small minority of the Jewish people, while to-day it is the anti-Zionists who are in an entirely insignificant minority. The recent tragic events in the Jewish world and the rapid growth and irresistible power of the Yishuv have transformed Zionism into an all-pervasive Jewish mass movement, ready and determined to achieve final victory for the sake of Israel's survivors and the future security of the Jewish people as a whole.

There is, however, one danger which the Zionist Congress can and must avoid by every means possible. Ruthless party strife and the lack of national discipline among Zionists themselves is the greatest menace with which we are faced to-day. If the activities of irresponsible groups are not checked in time, we may soon find ourselves in a hopeless, anarchic situation, reminiscent of the conditions that prevailed in Judea during the Jewish wars against Rome. Thus said Josephus Flavius of that period:

"Every new band of mutineers was for setting up new rulers. . . ."

The Jews were rent by feuds and factions amongst themselves."

"The Sicarii (terrorists) were intermixing with the multitude at festivals and despatching whomever they pleased without difficulty or danger of discovery."

"Intestine broils prevailed to such a degree of racial madness that the citizens were sheathing their swords in the bowels of each other."

Shall similar conditions be allowed to arise in our own times when issues are about to be decided upon which the whole future of our people depends? We must not play into the hands of our adversaries, who would welcome a Jewish civil war in Palestine. Unity and national discipline are to-day more vital and imperative than ever before. We therefore pray and hope that the Zionist Congress will succeed in establishing Zionist solidarity and in electing an Executive backed by the united will of the Jewish people in its fight for redemption. Internecine strife and acts of undisciplined groups weaken and undermine our position and render a comprehensive plan of action impossible.

The Zionist Congress is the supreme legislative and governing body of the Zionist Movement. Its decisions must be binding on all parties and groups and the instructions of the leadership elected by it will have to be carried out unhesitatingly. We wish the delegates to the 22nd Congress strength and courage, and trust that their deliberations will be crowned with success.

## CLAIMS FOR NAZI CONFISCATED PROPERTY

It appears from a statement received by the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies from the Control Office for Germany and Austria that it would be advisable for applicants to re-register their claims with that Office, notwithstanding that the claims may have already been filed with the Custodian of Enemy Property, Pretoria.

Further details are obtainable from the Welfare Officer, S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies, P.O. Box 1180, Johannesburg.

## Happy Function at Yiddish Folk School

There was a festive spirit among the large assembly that came to celebrate the opening of the Yiddish Folk School and Kindergarten last Saturday night.

The many speakers emphasised the added responsibility of the Jewish community to uphold and strengthen the Yiddish language and culture, since most of the great centres have now been destroyed.

Mr. Leibl Feldman, Chairman of the Folk School, gave an address on the achievements and aims of the institution, and Mr. I. Charlash, Director of the School, made a stirring appeal for greater support.

There was an excellent musical and cultural programme. Mr. Michael Dore, Miss Betty Pack and Mr. Bruno Raikin gave a delightful rendering of Arensky's Trio. Some members of the school choir sang the School Hymn and Folk Songs under the direction of Mr. M. Tabacknick. Cantor S. Mandel and Mr. S. Himmelstein pleased the audience with Yiddish Folk Songs, and Mr. Faivel Zygelbaum was at his best in his rendering of Zeitlin's Monologue and "Shtivel" ("Boots"). Mr. Shalit rendered Hebrew and Yiddish impersonations.

## All-Russian Music at Coates Concert

Albert Coates in his concert at the City Hall on Tuesday night chose an all-Russian programme, with Tschai-kovsky's Fourth Symphony as the major work.

This symphony, which the great composer wrote under extreme emotional stress, reveals his love of the poetic, and Mr. Coates, whose knowledge of Russian composers is profound, stirred the orchestra to heights of sheer brilliance.

Gerald Cassen, the guest vocalist, was unfortunately drowned by the orchestra, and the audience was only occasionally able to hear the richness and mellowness of his voice.

The Glinka Overture and Fantasia, "Francesca da Rimini," were well played.

The eight symphony concert, which took place at the City Hall on Tuesday of last week, marked the end of the Festival Concerts.

Vera de Villiers made her first appearance since her successful tour of Europe and was given a rousing welcome. Her first item, Beethoven's aria, "Ah Perfido," was interpreted with great warmth and feeling. The second part of the programme was devoted to Wagner's opera, "The Twilight of the Gods," from which two excerpts, "Siegfried's Journey to the Rhine" and "The Immolation of Brunnhilde," were vocal.

The orchestra also played Beethoven's "Egmont Overture" and gave a delightful performance of Brahms' variations.

## Youth Aliyah Committee Formed in Mayfair

The formation of a Youth Aliyah Committee for Mayfair was decided on at a meeting held at the home of Mrs. Fedler, 21 11th Avenue, Mayfair. Mrs. A. Bloch presided.

Mrs. Bloch was elected chairman; Mesdames Ostroff and Horwitz, vice-chairmen; Mrs. Kahn, secretary, and Mrs. Josselson, treasurer.

## OBITUARY

### Mrs. Yetta Shapiro

Citizens of Johannesburg, especially those of an older generation, have been grieved to hear of the sudden death, at the age of 62, of Mrs. Yetta Clara Shapiro, at her home in Johannesburg last Thursday.

Mrs. Shapiro was one of the pioneers of Johannesburg, where she settled as a young girl with her late parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Joffe, in 1892. She was the wife of Mr. Abe Shapiro, himself a highly esteemed member of the community.

The late Mrs. Shapiro was widely respected for her tireless social work on behalf of all sections of the community. She was a very active committee member of the Guild of Loyal Women in its earlier years, and for a long period served on the committees of the Witwatersrand Jewish Aged Home and the S.A. Jewish Orphanage.

Mrs. Shapiro served as a voluntary nurse in the Anglo-Boer War. At the outbreak of World War I and again at the outbreak of World War II, Mrs. Shapiro threw herself wholeheartedly into national service, which she maintained in each case until after the cessation of hostilities. During World War II she was a Section Leader in the Hospital Requisites Dept. of S.A.W.A.S. Command No. 14 and shouldered the responsibility of all the buying for that department. Her three sons and son-in-law were all on active service during the war. Mrs. Shapiro was always a most generous donor to any good cause.

She is survived by her husband, her daughter, Mrs. Wilfred Rosenberg, and her three sons, Messrs. Bernard Shapiro and Herbert Shapiro and Dr. Max Shapiro.

The funeral took place at the Jewish Cemetery, West Park, on Friday afternoon, when a great number of people gathered to pay their last respects.

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## Histadrut Ivrit Entertain Lt.-Col. Nadich

Rabbi Lt.-Col. Nadich was the guest of honour at a Melaveh-Malka held on November 16 at the Coronation Hall. Mr. M. Rutstein presided.

Col. Nadich spoke about Hebrew culture and education in Europe, and stressed the importance of cultural as well as economic reconstruction.

The Histadruth Ivrit choir, under the direction of Mr. Himmelstein, rendered a programme of Hebrew songs, and Messrs. Bilaykin and Poliva also contributed items.

Mr. P. Neaman stressed the importance of cultural reconstruction and asked for greater efforts in this direction.

Mr. M. Rutstein proposed the vote of thanks.

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## MORNING MARKETS IN AID OF YOUTH ALIYAH

The Melrose-Dunkeld Committee are holding regular monthly markets on Fridays from 8.30 a.m. at the home of the chairman, Mrs. L. Lipworth, 128, Oxford Road, opposite the Odeon Theatre. The first market was held last Friday and the stalls were stocked.

The Committee consists of Mrs. L. Lipworth (chairman), and the Misses Plaut and Mesdames L. Frank, H. Senior, R. Kaplan, S. Greenberg, Cohen, H. Davis, A. Greenberg, E. Slotar, Cohn and H. Rosen.

These markets are in aid of the Youth Aliyah, and it is hoped that the public will give full support to this worthy cause.