

BRILLIANT YOUTH GATHERING

The Need for a Deeper Study of Zionism

Sokolow and Jaffe at Youth Reception

ZIONIST Youth in South Africa launched its £1,000 "drive" on behalf of the Keren Hayesod at a brilliant reception in honour of Mr. Nahum Sokolow and Leib Jaffe in the Carlton Hotel on Saturday evening last. Although the function had been planned originally for five hundred, over six hundred young men and women filled the hall. High enthusiasm ruled throughout the evening, and the gathering joined in vocally with the Hebrew music of the orchestra. The response to the appeal for the Keren Hayesod yielded a result surpassing all expectations, almost half the amount of the "drive" being subscribed by those present.

THE gathering was presided over by Mr. A. Abrahamson, chairman of the Transvaal Zionist Youth Executive, who expressed the gratitude of the meeting at the presence among them of their distinguished guests. The evening, he said, was a red-letter occasion for the Jewish youth of South Africa, for, although it had always given strong support to Zionist endeavour, this was the first occasion on which it had organised a definite youth campaign for Zionist national funds. He thanked the gathering for the record attendance at this function, and expressed the hope that they would respond with similar enthusiasm to the appeal for contributions.

"The Need for Unity."

MR. B. GERING, chairman of the South African Zionist Youth Council, who was the next speaker, declared that he had received a genuine thrill at this welcome of youth to their esteemed leaders. The significant feature of the meeting, he said, was its *unity*—all sections of the youth movement in South Africa were here represented as one body—Habonim, Chalutzim, Young Israel, Hatechiya and others. This is how they should always be: one body united for the common good.

The great need of the day was for unity in the ranks of Jewry. Much had been achieved in Palestine, but a great deal more could have been achieved if only there had been a greater spirit of unity among the various sections of Zionists.

"We have to congratulate our leaders on the wonderful success they are achieving in South Africa for the Keren Hayesod," Mr. Gering continued. "I am sure the youth are going to respond in similar style, too." Youth was blessed with imagination, ambition and courage. He hoped they would use these gifts for the good of their nation and thus contribute their share towards the regeneration of the Jewish people. (Applause.)

"Zionism a Movement of Youth."

MR. LEIB JAFFE, who was the next speaker, was warmly applauded when he rose to address the gathering. He spoke in English, saying that he would like to have spoken in Hebrew, but he had been told that their Hebrew locally was even worse than his English. (Laughter.) He hoped, nevertheless, that when another Zionist embassy would come to them in two years' time, their knowledge of Hebrew would have improved sufficiently for the

envoys to address them in the national language of Israel.

Comparisons had been made between youth and Zionism. Actually, no comparison was necessary. Zionism was a movement of youth, full of the idealism and spirit of youth, and its achievements were the achievements of youth. No Jewish youth could be indifferent to the sufferings of the Jewish people. They knew these sufferings in their own life, and they could not but rebel against the humiliation of it all. In Germany their non-Jewish fellow-students went about singing "When Jewish blood spurts from the knife, all will be well again." To such words they could not turn a deaf ear. They had to side with the efforts of their people to attain once more to respected nationhood through the Jewish home in Palestine.

Great was the tragedy of the dispersion, and it seemed as if it were growing even greater. The Jews of the western world were forgetting Yiddish and they made scarcely any effort to learn Hebrew.

A knowledge of Hebrew was essential for appreciation of modern Jewish culture, for their common work and the unity that was so necessary. They should make their parents restless and eager for them to learn Hebrew and things Jewish. Only in that way could they prepare themselves for a fuller Zionist life. It rested with them, the youth, to carry on to fulfilment the great ideal of the Zionist regeneration. (Applause.)

Dual Loyalty.

MR. N. KIRSCHNER, chairman of the South African Zionist Federation, commented upon the dual loyalties of a Jew to the land in which he lived and to the national home of his own people. It was necessary that youth should be fully conscious of its duties to South Africa; but it was of vital importance, too, that they should be equally aware of their duties to Eretz Israel. Every nation wanted a home for itself, and Jewry wanted such a home, too. No civilised human being would or could deny the national right of a Jewish citizen anywhere to the homeland of his people, to Eretz Israel.

Indeed, the contrary was the case: a Jew was respected in proportion as he had respect for his race — for the Jewish past, present and future. The Jew who denied his Jewish inheritance was respected and trusted by no one.

Eretz Israel presented a glorious opportunity to youth. The work was only just

started, and it was youth who could carry it forward with vigour. Jewish youth in South Africa had responsibilities to Eretz Israel which it could not shake off. He exhorted them to work with all their might for the cause, that the people in Palestine might realise that they have the full support of the Jewish youth in South Africa. —(Applause).

Youth as the Force of Protest.

MR. NAHUM SOKOLOW, rising amidst prolonged cheering, declared the gathering to be a great inspiration.

He did not make distinctions between youth and age, nor did he believe in separating them into two camps.

Similarly with Zionism. In Zionist work there was no differentiation between youth and age. Zionist achievements were 90 per cent. the work of youth—not because the older people didn't want to do the work, but because they were physically unable to cope with all that youth could encompass. In this respect alone did youth have an advantage over age.

Youth was the force of protest, the national protest of Jewry. All other nations had been given the opportunity to develop their own countries and their own cultures. Why should Israel not have similar opportunities? That was the voice of protest, and this protest had expressed itself through Zionism not in words, but in deeds.

It was superfluous to make any special appeal to youth. The ideals of Zionism and the ideals of Jewish youth were synonymous, and youth was the natural pioneer of nationhood.

South African Jewry was everywhere recognised as unrivalled in its response to the call of Eretz Israel. He could assure the gathering that this present campaign endorsed that proud reputation. Everywhere the support had been tremendous. Everywhere the Keren Hayesod appeal was meeting with munificent response. South African Jewish youth, he felt sure, would respond, in proportion, equally magnanimously. They knew they were building for the future, and they were determined to make it a great and lustrous future.

His message to them, Mr. Sokolow concluded, was to work on with increased activity. Zionism was a science to be studied, and they should study it more and more. They must do more than support the work of the upbuilding—they must also take part in it. They must bring to Zionism the power of their fresh minds, so that they too might help constructively their people and their homeland. Money was a secondary thing.

Their heartfelt active support meant more than money. They had their place in South African life, and by their active work they could have their place in Palestine too.—(Applause.)

MR. ISRAEL DUNSKY, Organiser-Secretary of the Zionist Youth Council and a past President of the Young Israel Movement, declared that the present gathering was significant of the growing interest in Zionism among Jewish youth in South Africa. He was glad to note this growing concern on the part of youth with the

(Concluded on page 24.)