

S.A. JEWISH MINISTERS CONFER

Many Problems Discussed at Vereeniging

IMPORTANT CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

A CONFERENCE of the S.A. Jewish Ministers' Association was held in Vereeniging at the Isaac Lewis Hall on Tuesday last. Some thirty ministers from various parts of the country attended. The gathering was presided over by Chief Rabbi Dr. J. L. Landau.

After Dr. Landau had recited a prayer, the conference was opened by the Mayor of Vereeniging, Councillor J. L. Sharp, who welcomed the delegates to the town of Vereeniging. He wished the conference all success and paid a tribute to the Jewish community and its ministers, declaring that Jews were fulfilling their duty as loyal citizens of the country.

A message was read from Colonel K. Rood, M.P., who remarked in terms of warm praise upon the contributions Jews had made to South Africa. He particularly commented upon the fact that Vereeniging owed several of its flourishing industries to the enterprise of a well-respected Jewish friend, the late Mr. Sammy Marks, who had thus provided employment for thousands of non-Jews. He hoped that South Africans would follow the fine example set by Mr. Marks and make no racial distinctions, but work towards complete unity.

Rev. T. Heath, Chairman of the Vereeniging Ministers' Fraternal, welcomed the delegates on behalf of his Association and expressed the hope that the various anti-Semitic movements would rapidly disappear in the face of unity and goodwill. He paid a tribute to Rev. Glass whose collaboration in his Association he valued and stressed the fundamental unity in this relation.

The delegates were warmly welcomed on behalf of the Vereeniging Hebrew Congregation by its Chairman, Mr. J. Klaff.

Thereafter Dr. Landau addressed conference remarking in terms of appreciation upon the spirit of goodwill shown in the utterances of previous speakers and he stressed that Jews were doing their duty as citizens of South Africa despite the irresponsible propaganda that went on amongst certain sections of the people. He was especially happy to hear the tribute paid to the late Senator Marks, who had done so much for the welfare of this country, not only in Vereeniging but also in other parts of the Union.

Many Difficulties.

Dr. Landau added that the Jewish ministers in South Africa were faced with many difficulties. They had to contend with considerable opposition which made their task not an easy one. For instance, it was difficult for anyone to teach children respect for the Sabbath when that respect was lacking in their parents. Yet he hoped that knowledge and reverence for Judaism would be upheld and would grow. There was no distinction between the minister and the layman; both followed one common ideal which each should help to further. As for anti-Semitic propaganda, he felt sure that all who were sincerely devoted to their land and to the cause of brotherhood would give no care to it and would work for goodwill. He paid a tribute to Rev. Glass who had done so much for their Association.

Respect for Rabbis.

Dr. Landau was followed by Rabbi Kossowsky, the Rav of the Federation of Synagogues, who dealt with the position of the rabbi in South Africa and the importance of such a body as the Ministers' Association. He remarked that in most congregations the attitude towards the rabbi was not what it should be and appealed to all to improve this situation. He recommended certain reorganisations for the Association and appealed to all to exert their efforts to save Judaism from the danger of reform.

Rabbi S. Rosenzweig spoke of educational problems facing the Jewish ministers in South Africa and Rabbi M. Romm discussed the problems of "Rabanath" in the country, and also advocated, in connection with the promotion of Hebrew education, that a system of second Barmitzva should be instituted for boys of 16, so that their Hebrew and Jewish education might not stop at 13.

Conference adopted a resolution commending the Witwatersrand Church Council for the outspoken stand it had taken in condemning anti-Semitism and appealing for unity and goodwill between races.

Spirit of Goodwill.

The resolution calls upon every minister to endeavour to foster this worthy ideal and it was decided that the resolution be sent to the Church Council of South Africa. In connection with the situation in Palestine, conference adopted a resolution strongly protesting against partition, and it was decided to forward this to the Union Government and also to the Zionist Conference which was to be held the next week-end in Kimberley.

Refresher Courses.

In connection with the problems of Hebrew Education, it was decided to arrange, on the motion of Rev. Glass, refresher courses for ministers in conjunction with the Hebrew Teachers' Association and the S.A. Board of Jewish Education, provided that the latter body evinced a better spirit of co-operation than it had done in the past.

It was also decided to recommend to the Board, the appointment of a director who should be a follower of national and orthodox Judaism and to advise that the new director revise the syllabi for Hebrew education in consultation with representatives of the Jewish Ministers' Association and the Hebrew Teachers' Association.

It was also resolved that the incoming Executive should arrange a tour whose object it should be to promote the consolidation of religious and educational institutions and to arrange committee to foster goodwill between Jews and non-Jews. Conference also expressed strong criticism of the S.A. Board of Jewish Education particularly in regard to the Board's treatment of the Jewish Ministers' Association nominee to its Executive.

Ministers and Pension.

The question of pension and insurance for Ministers was discussed. An appeal was made to congregations that new ministers should not be engaged unless they could produce satisfactory documents from the Beth Din of Johannesburg or Capetown.

The conference congratulated Rabbi Zimmerman on launching the magazine "Yeshurun" and Mr. J. Rubik, the editor of "Barkai," in publishing the only Hebrew paper in South Africa.

An executive was elected for the ensuing year comprising the following: President, Chief Rabbi Dr. J. L. Landau; Chairman, Rabbi I. Kossowsky; Vice-Chairman, Rabbi S. Rosenzweig; Treasurer, Rev. H. Lipschitz; Joint Hon. Secretaries, Rev. B. Glass and Rev. Altshulth. Committee: Rabbi E. Zimmerman, Rabbi Dr. M. Romm, Rev. Dr. A. T. Shrock, Rev. Wolk, Rev. A. L. Kaplan, Rev. E. Melamed, and Rev. A. M. Kaplan. Rabbi Dr. Romm and Rev. A. M. Kaplan were appointed on behalf of the Free State.

In the interval between the morning and afternoon sessions, a luncheon was held in honour of the delegates by the Vereeniging Hebrew Congregation. The luncheon was presided over by Rev. B. Glass and toasts were proposed by Rev. Dr. A. T. Shrock, Rev. Eisenberg and Mr. J. Rubik.

Telegrams of greeting were received by conference, among them one from Rabbi Mirvish, of Capetown, and Rabbi Israel Abrahams, the newly-elected minister of Capetown.

An Anti-Nazi Drama.

Great interest was taken in the performance of "Till the Day I Die," by Clifford Odets, the young American playwright, whose work is arousing controversy in various parts of the world. Some time ago the play was produced in Johannesburg and drew large audiences. The play was produced last week-end at the New Library Theatre by the Left Wing Social Club and attracted such large audiences that after three performances a repeat performance had to be given on Monday evening to meet the demand.

There can be no doubt of the fine craftsmanship of Clifford Odets. He certainly is a rising dramatist of note. The play, too, was deeply interesting because of its up-to-date nature; the lines are well written and the characters excellently outlined.

Having said all this about the dramatist, the reviewer regrets he is unable to give great praise to the producer or the actors in this present production. A play of this kind should never be presented to a discerning theatre public in Johannesburg unless it could be produced in perfect style.

As a result of an all-round weak performance, the presentation never got quite "over the footlights" and one went away with just a dim idea as to what was really troubling the author and what message he wished to convey to his audience. At the same time credit is still due to the Left Wing Social Club for their ambitious effort.

MR. ISADOR EPSTEIN

The well-known piano virtuoso and pedagogue, Mr. Isador Epstein, has been selected as one of the examiners for music for the University of South Africa. The examinations started on the 25th inst., and Mr. Epstein has duly proceeded to Capetown to begin his duties.

DR. MALAN IN THE STATE

ATTITUDE TO THE JEWS
AGAINST FASCISM AND COMMUNISM.

DR. MALAN opened his Free State tour at Boshof on Tuesday, and he addressed a well-attended meeting in the open square in front of Town Hall. He dealt with a number of topics, and particularly with the question of South African neutrality in the event of war, saying that Government had committed South Africa to support of Britain; he dealt with the general platform of Nationalist Party and its attitude towards the Jews. He said that though the Cabinet was divided on the question of the admission of Jews to South Africa, in practice many Jews could come into the country as cared to make application. Immigration Board gave no preference to anyone as to how they carried the Aliens Act. They refused to give any information, and under a Government controlled by organised Jews this law could become a great danger to the country. Dr. Malan attacked the Government for its impotence, a result of which people were talking about Fascism. There was also danger of each section disapproving with the Government's failure in policy which would result in breaking up of the nation.

The Nationalist Party, however, had a clear policy. It was democratic and would remain so. It was the people's party, and those who voted for it would protect democracy. Dr. Malan declared they must fight Fascism and Communism, each of which robbed the people of freedom. The Nationalists stood for the distribution of wealth to the people of the country and were opposed to the present capitalist system where eighty per cent. of the dividend on the gold mines went out of South Africa. In reply to a question, Dr. Malan said that there were enough Jews in South Africa already, and that the influx should now be stopped. He said he had appealed to the Jews to help him, but they had attacked him.

He gave his second address at Kroonstad on Wednesday night before a packed Town Hall. According to the "Rand Daily Mail," he repeated much of what he had said at Boshof, and attacked Mr. Hofmeyr and Mr. Pirow, referring to the latter as a "circus lion" and to Mr. Hofmeyr as his tamer. He declared Mr. Hofmeyr was not only the champion of the natives, but the self-appointed champion of the Jews, who would see to it that he was retained in the Cabinet. Asked to declare his policy towards South African Jews, he dealt with this topic along the lines of his speech at Boshof, and said that the Jews had become a powerful force in South African commerce and were also becoming more and more powerful in the professions, and to such an extent that steps must be taken to limit their activities in certain directions.

Adath Israel Congregation

APPOINTMENT OF CANTOR
INSPEKTOR.

The above congregation in Pretoria has appointed Cantor Inspektor, synagogue reader. Cantor Inspektor was the former chief cantor at Wolmarans Street Synagogue, Johannesburg. The new chazan will be appointed during the forthcoming High Festivals and will have the assistance of a large choir.