

## IMPRESSIONS OF THE RHODESIAN COMMUNITY

### Mr. B. Gering Discusses His Recent Trip

Strong in Zionist sentiment, eager to be associated with every effort on behalf of Palestine—that is how Mr. Bernard Gering summed up his impressions of the Rhodesian community, when he returned to Johannesburg last week after a four-day visit to Bulawayo and Salisbury. The indefatigable Vice-Chairman of the S.A. Zionist Federation, Mr. Gering is among the leading members of the Johannesburg Zionist community who have flung themselves heart and soul into the work for the 1941 drive for the Keren Kayemeth, and his trip to Rhodesia was undertaken for the purpose of collaborating with Dr. Alexander Goldstein in the inauguration of the campaign in Bulawayo and Salisbury.

**D**ISCUSSING his impressions of his visit in an interview given to the "Zionist Record," Mr. Gering said he was extremely glad to have had the opportunity of meeting a community of which he had heard so much. He had enjoyed both renewing his acquaintance with many of the Rhodesians whom he had previously met as delegates at Zionist Conferences, and also meeting for the first time many people who till then were known to him only by name.

He had found the Rhodesian community a most interesting one, composed as it is of pioneers who have lived there for many years as well as of more recent arrivals, among whom are many refugees from Nazified Europe, and some who have latterly come from Greece.

"Both in Bulawayo and Salisbury," he added, "I was greatly impressed by the strength and vitality of their communal organisation. Both centres take a most active interest in Jewish and Zionist affairs."

He had been deeply impressed, too, he said, by the strength of Zionist sentiment both in Bulawayo and Salisbury. In both places he had found an amazing appreciation of the spirit of Palestine to-day, and a complete understanding of the aims and needs of the Jewish Homeland. This splendid Zionist consciousness had revealed itself in the truly remarkable response made in the two centres to the appeal launched on behalf of the Keren Kayemeth.

Both before and after the arrival of Dr. Goldstein and himself in Rhodesia, intensive activity had taken place in this connection, and the efforts of the Bulawayo and Salisbury communities for the J.N.F. campaign had so far been crowned with outstanding success. In both centres the frequent doubling of contributions previously announced had become an accepted feature of the progress of the campaign—in one instance a supporter of the cause had even quadrupled his contribution.

In Bulawayo every potential contributor had been located with the result that the number of contributors in the 1941 campaign will be almost double that of the 1939 one, while the total results achieved in Bulawayo so far are far in advance of 1939.

**In Salisbury.**

OF Salisbury, too, Mr. Gering had the same triumphant story of remarkable response to tell.

"The inaugural function in Salisbury was one of the most impressive



Mr. B. Gering.

campaign meetings I have ever attended," he declared. "The response was spontaneous and on a magnificent scale. Both sections of the Salisbury community, the Ashkenazi and the Sephardi, were extremely well represented on this occasion, and immediately after the conclusion of the addresses by the speakers, the Chairman of the evening rose to say that he was doubling the contribution which he himself had previously announced. This example had an electrifying effect on those present, many of whom immediately followed his example.

"At this function, too, there was another illustration of the keen Zionist spirit which prevails in Salisbury. When all the contributions had been announced, the Chairman said he was short of £49 to make up a round figure. Within two minutes well over £150 had been contributed by those present to make up the required amount."

And the spirit of real sacrifice for Palestine was reflected in the story which Mr. Gering related of three soldiers, stationed at Salisbury, who had attended the inaugural function there, and at the conclusion of the addresses had each contributed three guineas.

"As these soldiers were privates," remarked Mr. Gering, "and you know what their rates of pay are, their contributions really represented a sacrifice."

"I should like here," he added, "to pay a tribute to the part Dr. Goldstein played in helping to achieve the remarkable response to the campaign both in Bulawayo and Salisbury. The

appeal he makes to an audience is undoubted. The insight with which he describes Palestine, and the contrast he draws between the tragedy of the Jewish position in present day Europe and Jewish life in the National Homeland, drive home his point with irresistible logic."

Enthusiasm for the Keren Kayemeth was also demonstrated by the numerous offers made both in Bulawayo and Salisbury to accompany Mr. Hadley and Mr. Hareven, of Headquarters, who are remaining in Rhodesia for some weeks, to outlying districts in order to assist them in their work for the Jewish National Fund.

"Generally the Rhodesian community seems to realise that this is not a campaign which can be discussed in terms of merely achieving a higher standard than previously. With conditions what they are to-day, it is a campaign which calls for real sacrifice. As I asked during the course of my visit, by what standard does the mother who to-day sends her only son to the field of battle measure her contribution to the war effort? Her standard is the only one we can accept to-day—one of sacrifice."

**A Bond With Headquarters.**

**A**LTHOUGH Mr. Gering had gone to Rhodesia primarily in the interests of the campaign, he had welcomed the opportunity of meeting Rhodesian workers and discussing with them the many problems confronting South African Zionism at present.

"The general impression I formed both in Bulawayo and Salisbury is that the community is most eager to have visitors who can explain the present position to them, and the work which is being done in Palestine to-day.

"They are a community extremely anxious to help in the upbuilding of Palestine, and all the people I spoke to are unanimous in their belief that there is a very large field in Rhodesia for more extensive Zionist work."

"Apart from immediate campaign purposes," concluded Mr. Gering, "a tour such as this one to Rhodesia must necessarily strengthen Headquarters' bonds with the various Zionist centres in South Africa."

### A "MUSICALE" ON SUNDAY NIGHT

In Aid of J.N.F.

Miss Betty Pack ('cellist) will play at the "Musical" to be given in the home of Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Karnovsky, 39 St. Patrick Road, Houghton, in aid of the Jewish National Fund, on Sunday, 2nd November. She will take the place of Mr. Eugen Magid, who is unable to appear. The other artists are Miss Millie Van Geuns (pianist), Miss Lila Emdin (soprano) and Rev. S. Backon (tenor). Tickets may be obtained from the conveners, Mrs. H. L. Karnovsky and Mrs. I. W. Jacobson, or from the members of the Houghton branch of the Johannesburg Women's Zionist League, under the auspices of which the function is being held.

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### Johannesburg Women's Zionist League

**Southern Suburbs Branch.**—A literary afternoon was held at the residence of Mrs. Gorfil, 32 Prairie Street, on Wednesday, October 8.

Mrs. Abrams, the chairman, welcomed all present and particularly Mrs. Meltzer, the chairman of the Hillbrow Branch, who had consented to speak to the branch.

Mrs. Meltzer gave an interesting talk on life in Palestine from the early nineteenth century up to the present day. During the afternoon Mrs. Melamed contributed a piano solo.

The afternoon terminated after Mrs. Back had proposed a vote of thanks to the hostess, speaker and artist.

**Observatory Study Circle.**—The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 5, at 10.30 a.m., at the residence of Mrs. Saenger, 172 Francis Street. Mrs. L. Tager will speak on "The Connection Between a People and its Language." All interested are welcome.

### PARYS

A successful gathering was held at Parys on Thursday, 9th October, under the auspices of the local Zionist Society. The visitors were Messrs. Edgar Bernstein and M. Lazar, of Johannesburg, and Cantor and Mrs. Mandel, of Benoni. Mr. S. Marcus, Chairman of the Parys Zionist Society, presided over the gathering, which was held in the local synagogue, and cordially welcomed the visitors.

The addresses by Mr. Bernstein and Mr. Lazar made a deep impression, and an enthusiastic reception was accorded the songs sung by Cantor Mandel. A hearty vote of thanks to the visitors was proposed by Rev. Fisher. A pleasant feature of the evening was the singing by the children of the local Cheder, who had been trained by Rev. Fisher.

Refreshments were served by the ladies of the society. Occasion was taken by the hon. secretary of the Society, Mrs. Tager, to distribute certificates to Keren Hayesod contributors.

At the conclusion of the meeting all adjourned to the residence of Rev. and Mrs. Fisher. Here refreshments were again served and Cantor Mandel, in response to popular request, sang a further number of songs.

During their stay in Parys the visitors were the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Tanchel.