

sia, although it does so under extremely difficult conditions. Many members of societies affiliated to the Halutz Movement have been arrested and others have been banished to the interior of Russia, to the Caspian area, to the Urals, or to Siberia; even there, however, these exiles continue to search for ways and means of enabling them to learn something more about Palestine and the Movement. Their attitude is one of utter devotion to the brink of self-immolation.

The movement continues its work by means of groups of five or six, meeting in private houses for talks, reading Hebrew books, planning future activities, and so on. This kind of activity goes on ceaselessly in scores of provincial towns. The Centre keeps in contact with the branches through the visits of representatives, who give the members the latest news from Palestine and the Movement in general, which they have received from various sources. A common directorate for Hehalutz Hazair, Freiheit, Gordonia and Akiba have been established. Hashomer Hazair continues its activities independently, but in general matters participates with others. Much attention has been focussed on the position of the former "Tarbut" schools. There were cases of pupils rebelling against the New Order, as a result of which many of them were arrested. The authorities have lately tightened up their watch, which has made every activity considerably more difficult. In addition to all this the economic situation is becoming steadily worse. In a letter from Lvov on the position of members of Hashomer Hazair we read: "Conditions among us are as bad as they can possibly be; clothing is scanty and so is our food." The following story, told in a report of one of the Halutz organisations in the Russian occupied territory, gives some indication of the dangers and hardships with which such secret activities are fraught. A woman member was sent during the winter on a mission for the Movement, but her feet got frost-bitten and she was brought back to Vilna, where she was operated on and her toes amputated. Another time, this time a man was despatched, but was never heard of again.

#### Lithuania.

The training centres which comprised some two thousand Halutzim were disbanded immediately upon annexation of Lithuania by Russia. Their members thus lost hope of continuing their training, but the Youth organisations are carrying on in spite of everything, although naturally in secret. A letter from members of the Polish Hehalutz in Lithuania says: "The strain we are going through at the present time is tremendous, but we are behaving with exemplary restraint. We are bound together by a common faith and fate, and are struggling valiantly to preserve the family. Possibilities of employment have shrunk considerably, and the prospect of starvation looms over two thousand Halutzim. We are continuing our work with the children" (referring to the members) "though it is becoming increasingly difficult because of the heat which gets greater from day to day, so that I am afraid that even this week we may be compelled to look for work in the shadows out of the sun."

The Lithuanian Zionist Youth Organisations are quite prepared to find their

activities banned in the future. The societies of Hechalutz Hazair, Freiheit and Gordonia have established common headquarters which direct all the activities of the united body through liaison officers who also help to maintain contact between the separate organisations. The headquarters keep in constant touch with members in occupied Poland.

As was mentioned above, the training centres were disbanded and the members reorganised in small groups scattered among the various provincial towns, although some were left in Vilna itself. However, it is now greatly feared that all of them will have to leave the towns, which are now forbidden by the authorities to refugees and people without trade. The economic situation becomes worse from day to day. The Refugee Committee has been liquidated, no relief arrives nowadays from the "Joint," and in every way the Halutzim are in desperate straits. The hope of emigrating to Palestine is the one thing that gives them strength to endure their trials. A Halutz liaison officer recently returned to Palestine describes the position in his report in this way: "Any announcement to the effect that immigration to Palestine has become impossible either for those who have already been granted certificates or even for other candidates would be a very heavy blow indeed to the sixteen hundred Halutzim who are fighting for their Zionism and their very existence in the scattered little Lithuanian townships. Should immigration be postponed much longer, they will be faced with the additional danger of being exiled to the interior of Russia, as thousands of refugees have been exiled already. On the other hand, any reliable news of more hopeful immigration prospects would give enormous hope and encouragement to a very great number of people."

#### Latvia.

The Halutz Movement in Latvia comprised a number of youth organisations such as Hashomer Hazair, Noar Borochof (Dror), Gordonia and Maccabi Hazair. Some months before the Russian annexation of Latvia negotiations were begun which resulted in the amalgamation of Maccabi Hazair and Hechalutz. There were about two hundred members in training in three urban kibbutzim and four rural farms. In addition to these a hundred and fifty more were otherwise employed. When the Russians entered, the authorities disbanded the kibbutzim, and all youth organisations were asked to join the Komsomol. However, the Zionist youth organisations were quick to liquidate themselves voluntarily before they were forced to make an official announcement of a change of policy. Very few individual members of the kibbutzim resigned from the Movement after these centres were disbanded. A liaison officer who recently returned to Palestine says: "The last meetings of the training kibbutzim and the branches of the youth organisations were dramatic in the extreme. The 'Techzakna' anthem was accompanied with tears on the part of the male no less than the female members."

Directly the training centres and the Movement were officially liquidated work began again in secret. Despite the blows which they have received, Zionists in Latvia are continuing their activities.

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two nations will be, as it shall be my desire to make them, perpetual."

While, however, there is every reason for confidence and optimism it is in a chastened spirit that we enter upon new year. It is impossible to exaggerate the suffering and misery which is being endured by vast numbers of people who are to-day the victims of Nazi barbarism. It is only faith in the ultimate defeat of the forces of evil that sustains them. Jews in free countries fully realise what is at stake in this war, for the plight of millions of their brethren is sufficient warning to them. The first step towards co-operation with the Axis is anti-Jewish legislation as is demonstrated by such countries as Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, which have hitherto always been friendly towards the Jews. Only through a defeat of the Axis powers can anti-Semitism be halted anywhere in the world and towards this defeat Jews must be prepared to make every sacrifice that lies in their power, and thus help to bring about that better world in which it is hoped Jews together with other oppressed nations will regain their freedom.

## Zionist Youth Office.

The attention of members of Zionist Youth is drawn to the fact that the Office at 6, Barrack Street, will be closed in the mornings until Tuesday, January 14th

## "At Home" to Visiting Women Zionists.

The "At Home" to visiting women Zionists under the auspices of the Bnoth Zion Association, which was arranged for 9th January, 1941, will now take place on the afternoon of **Wednesday, 8th January**, at the Pavilion Hall, Muizenberg.

Mr. B. Gering, Vice-Chairman of the S.A. Zionist Federation, will be the speaker.

A cordial invitation is extended to all Zionist women visiting the Peninsula.

## Cantor Mandel's Forthcoming Recital.

The Cape Town public will have the opportunity of hearing next Thursday evening, January 9th, in the Muizenberg Pavilion, the famous Cantor S. Mandel late of Warsaw and Vilno, in a selection of Chazonuth, the latest Jewish folk-songs and arias.

Cantor Mandel has a magnificent tenor voice of remarkable range, and is famous for his beautiful interpretation of sacred music.

Cantor Mandel has occupied positions in the leading synagogues of Warsaw, Vilno and Cracow, and it is anticipated that the programme to be submitted by him at the concert next Thursday evening will be one of the greatest musical treats that Cape Town and Muizenberg has experienced for a long time.