

THE ZIONIST RECORD

THE ORGAN OF SOUTH AFRICAN JEWRY

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Tension Continues

ALTHOUGH the military authorities in Palestine have stayed their hand during the past week, the tension in the Yishuv continues. This is to be expected so long as the leaders of Zion and the best sons and daughters of the Yishuv remain behind barbed wire. Yet it is to the lasting credit of the Yishuv that, faced as it was for nearly two weeks with a determined and fierce onslaught, the people have not lost their nerve and have not given way to counsels of despair. This solidarity of the Yishuv was displayed in many ways, under most trying circumstances, and on many occasions throughout the crisis. It reached its most impressive point during the strike observed on Wednesday.

Such self-control and self-discipline is not attained with ease, and even while we are complimenting the Yishuv on its endurance, some 1,600 men and women are engaged in a hunger-strike in protest against their continued detention. Jewry throughout the world has been aroused by the outrages committed against the Yishuv. There has been much activity, which expressed itself in protests, demonstrations, meetings and diplomatic interventions; but when all this is summed up, and no matter how creditable it is, there must remain amongst the Jews the world over a sense of frustration, a feeling of helplessness and dissatisfaction. How very poor are our own efforts compared with those of the Yishuv! It is they who stand in the forefront of the struggle. Their reaction to recent events has not yet fully crystallised itself. At the time of writing serious discussions are taking place among all responsible bodies. Whatever the decision, the Yishuv must have the backing of the whole Zionist movement, and the forthcoming full meeting of the Jewish Agency will be awaited with interest by Jews throughout the world.

When serious decisions are being made, in an atmosphere charged with tension, every step has to be watched with the utmost care; every word must be considered most seriously before it is uttered. Perhaps at no other time in our history were we called upon to display greater statesmanship than to-day. The public should, therefore, be warned against various rumours, some of which might be deliberately put out in order to mislead, misguide and confuse. At a time when Jewry is most impatient, when our survivors are in concentration camps and our leaders in detention camps; when Polish Jewry experiences such horrors as the Kielce pogrom—at such a time we are called upon to display patience, even if only for a few weeks.

This paradoxical situation is unavoidable. The Yishuv has not allowed itself to be provoked into precipitate action, and Zionism will not allow itself to be provoked into precipitate statesmanship. Our leaders have not yet reached any definite decision; a little time must elapse before the Agency meets undisturbed and reaches finality.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the self-restraint and the self-discipline adopted by the Yishuv is in itself a display of great moral strength. Let not this be interpreted as hesitancy or inaction. It has been made clear by Dr. Weizmann that there must be unconditional release of the detainees, and that no consultations with Britain are possible so long as the elected leaders of the Yishuv are behind barbed wire. There can be, and will be, no compromise and no renewal of confidence if any trace is left of the shameful operations which were initiated in Palestine with the attack on the Jewish Agency.

Herzl Anniversary

THIS trying period in Zionist history coincides with the anniversary of the death of Dr. Herzl, which is being observed to-day. The anniversary is always an occasion for contemplation, in retrospect, of the history of modern political Zionism, since the day when it was evolved by Dr. Herzl. Looking back on the time that has passed, we are constantly reminded of Dr. Herzl's prognostication of the fate of Jewry, but we are also reminded of his great faith in our future and in the strength of our movement. He strove for Jewish Statehood and for a united Jewry under the flag of Zion. Both these aims are being forged to-day. In honouring his memory it is, therefore, our duty to work hard for the attainment of that unity which is so essential to-day. Our reports from Palestine this week remind us that those who are opposed to Israel in its land, are waiting for the opportunity of seeing Jewry disunited and at loggerheads. Nothing would suit them better. Our best commemoration of Herzl can, therefore, be expressed by solidifying our forces and by presenting a united front.

The commemoration of the name of Bialik must equally serve to stimulate the strengthening of our spiritual life and the development of Jewish culture, without which Zionism remains a body without a soul.

Synagogue Council

A CONFERENCE of Hebrew congregations is being convened by the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies for the purpose of establishing a Synagogue Council for Southern Africa. We have always advocated in these columns the co-ordination and unification of congregational life. Time and again events have shown how sadly we were in need of a co-ordinating congregational institution. It is conceded that the vast distances separating the various communities, and many other factors, render complete unification impossible, but there is certainly no reason why the community should, time and again, be faced with various conflicts in the Rabbinate and with a situation which renders it necessary for a secular body, such as the Board of Deputies, to cater for the religious needs of South African Jewry. We have no doubt that the vast majority of members of our congregations are keen on seeing a harmonious system of co-operation between religious bodies in this country. Spokesmen in all walks of life and of various communities in the country have repeatedly urged the establishment of a Synagogue Council at congresses of the Board of Deputies, at regional conferences and on other occasions.

It is, therefore, the duty of all concerned to make this conference a success. Firstly, the conference should be attended by a most representative body of delegates. Every province, every centre, big or small, should make a point of sending delegates to the conference. Secondly, all concerned must be animated by a spirit of goodwill and tolerance and by an earnest desire to work together in a mood of "give and take," so as to bring an end to the chaotic conditions of congregational affairs that exist in this country.

AMBASSADOR OF MUSIC

Arrival of Loyonnet

Paul Loyonnet, a son of France, is not only one of the greatest pianists of his generation, but also an ambassador of music. Through his efforts Dr. Salomon, conductor of the Palestine radio orchestra, has been invited by the French Government to lead the famous Paris Symphony Orchestra in two concerts of all-Jewish music, making it an event of historic importance.

This information was gleaned by a representative of the "Zionist Record" who interviewed M. Loyonnet on his arrival in Johannesburg by air from Palestine, last Wednesday.

M. Loyonnet was an eye-witness to some of the incidents that had occurred in Palestine during recent weeks. He related how his car was stopped by a patrol of British soldiers, one of whom covered it with a tommy-gun while the passengers were being questioned.

"I was deeply impressed by the patience and restraint shown by the people of the Yishuv during this time of stress. Before going to Palestine, Zionism had little meaning for me, but I have come away with a full understanding of the national struggle of the Jewish people," he declared.

In Palestine he found that music had become an integral part of the life of the people, and this was particularly evident in the settlements, where he had played to most enthusiastic audiences.

He had a very high opinion of the Palestine Symphony Orchestra whose quality, he said, compared favourably with the best of its kind in the world, notwithstanding the fact that the orchestra was handicapped by lack of funds and had to rely mainly on part-time players. He was particularly happy to play with the Histadruth Youth Orchestra, which was of an exceptionally high standard. Indeed, it was the keen musical appreciation shown by the Youth that convinced him of the Yishuv's great future in creating its own native music.

M. Loyonnet has come to South Africa under the auspices of the Solly Aronowsky Concert Bureau. He will make his first appearance at the 20th Century Theatre on Sunday night, and during his stay will also give special concerts in aid of the Palestine Orchestra and Habimah, as well as the Conservatoire of Music in Jerusalem.

Offer To Execute Hoess

WARSAW, June 21.—In connection with the trial of Rudolf Hoess, former commandant of the Oswiecim concentration camp, documents are being prepared proving his criminal activities.

The Cracow Committee for the Investigation of German War Crimes is in possession of documents illustrating Hoess's activities as the inventor of the crematoria and gas chambers, and of orders signed by Hoess. There are also reports signed by Hoess on executions carried out, and suggestions for further mass murders.

Former inmates of the Oswiecim camp have written to the authorities asking to be allowed to execute Hoess personally.

PROTEST TO VATICAN

Priests Helped Nazi Underground

(From Our Own Correspondent)

PRAGUE, Monday.—The Czech Government has presented a Memorandum to the Vatican alleging that many members of the Catholic Clergy in Bohemia and Slovakia have received instructions from their Bishops to collaborate with underground Nazi organisations. The memorandum states that the priests had been advised to pursue an anti-Semitic policy, thus becoming a danger to the 150,000 Jewish citizens.

SIX German doctors, accused of having sterilised 3,000 Jewish women in Holland, have been committed for trial in Berlin.

A MOB in Baghdad attacked local Jews and looted their shops recently. The attack followed a rumour spread by Arabs that "on secret orders from Moscow, Jews had been organising anti-British demonstrations."