

Prominent Speakers At Opening Ceremony Of Jewish Centre

THE Jewish Centre was formally opened, in the presence of a large and representative gathering, at a reception held at Corona Lodge on Tuesday night of last week. Dr. H. Sonnabend, chairman of the Provisional Council of the Centre, presided.

Opening the proceedings, Dr. Sonnabend expressed the gratitude of the Provisional Council to the outstanding services of Dr. Harris in the establishment of the Centre. He welcomed the representatives of the various organisations and also read a number of messages from institutions in America and prominent personalities in Johannesburg and elsewhere.

Mr. S. M. Kuper, K.C., speaking on behalf of the S.A. Jewish Board of Deputies, paid tribute to the few individuals who had sponsored the ambitious project. He dwelt on the development of the Jewish Centre movement in the United States, England and other countries and expressed the hope that the local venture would be sponsored by and become a charge upon the community as a whole.

"The community centre should be a 'Jewish home from home,' a meeting place for all, irrespective of their individual religious outlooks or their ideologies. It should be a place for recreation, but in particular it should be a place for promoting genuine interest in Jewish culture," he declared.

He hoped that the beginnings of the present centre would prove a stimulus to Jewish social and cultural life in South Africa and would

result in a strong movement, backed by community support, to establish the centres which South African Jewry so badly needed.

Dr. I. J. Harris expressed his gratitude to the instructors and directors of the various departments who had helped to make the institution a success. He referred to the contribution made to Jewish life by Jewish Centres in other parts of the world and thought it was fitting that Johannesburg should have been selected for the establishment of the first Jewish Centre in this country. He mentioned that plans for the erection of a proper centre in the city, at an estimated cost of about £250,000, had already been prepared and he hoped that, with the support of the entire community, this scheme would be brought to fruition.

Mrs. Katie Gluckmann conveyed to Dr. Harris and those whom he had inspired the good wishes of the S.A. Zionist Federation. The centre, she said, filled a much-needed want in Johannesburg, and she hoped that in time to come it would to some extent play the role in Jewish life as the synagogue had done throughout the ages.

Mr. Judes, on behalf of the senior council of the centre, extended an invitation to the public to visit the in-

stitution and to participate in its activities. He specially appealed to parents to encourage their children to spend their leisure time at the centre.

Rabbi Dr. L. Rabinowitz paid a tribute to the idealism and pioneering efforts of Dr. Harris. He felt sure that as long as Dr. Harris was associated with the institution the cultural and spiritual aspects would always remain paramount.

Dr. Ellen Hellman said the Jewish mothers in particular should welcome the efforts of Dr. Harris in providing the necessary background which the youth required for the maintenance of a Jewish way of life in the Diaspora. "We must meet the crying needs of the youth and find the correct stimulus of drawing them into the Jewish way of life," she declared.

In extending her own good wishes for the success of the venture, she expressed the hope that all women would give their fullest support to this most praiseworthy effort.

Mr. I. J. Hersch conveyed the greetings of the S.A. Board of Jewish Education. He assured Dr. Harris and his colleagues of the wholehearted co-operation of the board in the task which they had set themselves.

During the evening Cantor I. Alter and the Jewish Centre Choir, under the direction of Mr. Jerry Idelson, rendered Hebrew and Yiddish songs, and Miss Hedy Haas presented some sketches. The programme was greatly enjoyed by the gathering.

Mr. Dave Etkind, vice-chairman of the Provisional Council, proposed the vote of thanks to the speakers and the artistes.

LEADING GENERAL ZIONIST ON A VISIT FROM PALESTINE

Advocate H. Klementynovski, a member of the executive of the General Zionist Party in Palestine, arrived on a short visit to Southern Africa. He will be in touch with the local United Zionist Party in connection with consolidating the forces of General Zionism here. Mr. Klementynovski has met leading members of the United Zionist Party and it is expected he will address a number of meetings in the country.

Mr. Klementynovski is also vice-president of the Palestine Maritime League in Tel Aviv. He hopes to interest himself in the work of the local branch and to intensify its activities. He was the last president of the Jewish community in Bialystok and left the town in 1940 after having wound up the congregational affairs and concealed all its valuable documents. A portion of the archives has been found after liberation. He is the present chairman of the Bialystok Landsleit Society in Tel Aviv.

Mr. Klementynovski left Tel Aviv on August 14. He says that there was considerable tension in the Yishuv because of the anxiety lest an aggravation of Arab-Jewish relations might open a "second front" for the Yishuv. The Yishuv was called upon not to be provoked into disorders, and there was particular concern about the demeanour of the dissident groups. It was realised that at a time like this the dissidents must submit to national discipline and there must be complete unity of the Yishuv in order to stand up against forthcoming trials.

The Yishuv is convinced that dissidents must be stopped but also conscious of the fact that an internal war would play into the hands of its enemies. Nevertheless, there is no panic in Palestine. The work is being continued and daily activities are normal.

FUNCTIONING OF SHECHITA BOARD

In November, 1944, the Government introduced a basic retail price at which meat could be sold, but this basic price made no provision for the cost of Kosher killing. The result was that the Shochetim, previously engaged by the wholesale butchers, found themselves without employment and consequently the Jewish community could not obtain Kosher meat. The Federation of Synagogues, after consultations with the Board of Deputies, approached the Price Controller, with the result that the Jewish community accepted a tax of 1d. per lb. for beef and 1d. per lb. for mutton to defray the cost of Shochetim, thus providing Kosher meat for the Jewish community.

Consequent on the imposition of the self-tax on the Jewish community, a meeting of all the Congregations, Federation of Synagogues, the Board of Deputies and the Beth Din of Johannesburg was called and a Shechita Board formed.

Since the early part of 1945, negotiations to implement and arrange the functioning of the Shechita Board have continued. In March, 1947, the Shechita Board was able to commence functioning and various difficulties are gradually being overcome.

A tribute must be paid to the untiring efforts of Mr. H. J. Kagan, acting as chairman, Mr. N. Rosenfeld, Mr. M. Barsel and Mr. D. I. Gordon, who have been helped by the Federation of Synagogues, the Johannesburg Beth Din and the Board of Deputies.

The first general meeting of the Board will take place on Sunday, August 31 (details of which have been posted to the congregations) and an earnest request is herewith made to the congregations to attend the meeting to elect a strong and responsible body to carry on the work of the Shechita Board for the ensuing period.

Printers From D.P. Camp Arrive In Johannesburg

Two Yiddish printers arrived in Johannesburg this week straight from a Bavarian camp. They are Abraham Krasnovski and Herzl Slutzki.

Ever since the beginning of the war there has been a grave shortage of Hebrew and Yiddish typesetters in this country. The number of men able to do this work is exceedingly small and it was found almost impossible to obtain facilities for printing Hebrew texts in South Africa. The local Yiddish newspaper, "Afrikaner Zeitung," was particularly hard hit by this shortage.

Krasnovski hails from Shavel and Slutzki is from Alita. Both men experienced the Kovno ghetto, and were in a camp in Bavaria at the time of liberation. With great ingenuity they managed to set up the first Hebrew printing plant in Bavaria and to print the newspaper "Unzer Veg," which caters for displaced persons.

They will be working for the Electric Printing Company, Johannesburg.

PRETORIA U.J.W.

Forthcoming Meetings

At the next Members' Meeting of the Pretoria Union of Jewish Women on Tuesday, August 26, at 10 a.m. at the Jewish Memorial Hall, the guest speaker will be Dr. Esther Joffe-Meyer (Doctor of Laws and Literature) who is on a short visit to South Africa from the United States. Dr. Joffe-Meyer is an author, and the subject of her talk will be "Responsibilities and duties of Jewish women in the present world crisis."

On Sunday, August 24, there will be a mass meeting at 8 p.m. at the Jewish Memorial Hall for the S.A. Jewish War Appeal. Mrs. Minna Levitas and Mr. Harry Cohen will be the speakers.

On Tuesday, August 26, at 8 p.m., Dr. Carl Hermann Voss, of New York will speak at the Pretoria Technical College.

On September 11, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., there will be a Yomtov morning market at the home of Mrs. Gor, 754 Church Street, corner Becket Street.

Lecture by Dr. Zidel

On Thursday, August 28, at 8 p.m. Dr. J. Zidel will lecture on "Jewish Dietary Laws" to the Parents' Forum of the Yiddish Folk and Nursery School in Johannesburg (45 Upper Meyer Street, Doornfontein). The lecture will be in Yiddish and the questions and discussion in both English and Yiddish.

Cape Town Pianist To Broadcast



Miss Rachel Rabinowitz, the talented Capetonian pianist who has just been on a visit to Johannesburg where she broadcast with the S.A.B.C. Orchestra and gave other successful recitals. She is now in Durban where she is booked to broadcast with the orchestra and to give solo recitals.

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