

# Weizmann Addresses Actions Committee at Historic Function

BASLE, Monday. — The Zionist Actions Committee met here to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first Zionist Congress. All the members assembled at Zurich station, several train carriages being reserved for them, and on their arrival in Basle they all went to the scene of the first congress, where the Zionist flag was flying.

## Congress Jubilee at Basle Casino

Long before the fixed time the Casino was packed to capacity, presenting a most festive appearance. A huge portrait of Herzl was in the centre between two enormous Zionist flags. Although the structure has been rebuilt the hall is exactly the same shape as when the early congresses took place.

As Dr. Weizmann was led up to the platform with his wife, the audience rose and applauded. The chairman sat on the platform and the Executive members just below. Willie Bloch, head of the Swiss Zionist Federation, opened the proceedings by paying tribute to Dr. Weizmann and welcoming all present, especially the members of the Executive and the Actions Committee and David Farbstein, who had helped to organise the first congress.

Among those who greeted Dr. Weizmann were Leib Jaffe, who attended

the first congress, and Joachim Stukewsky.

Dr. Weizmann, who rose to speak amid much applause, referred to the deterioration of their relations with Britain, one sin leading to another, and he reminded his listeners that governments and administrations, including Zionist administrations, came and went, but that the people lived on.

"Our enemies seek to fasten all the sins on to us. My voice is weak but I would make a last appeal to both sides to stay their hands and to reflect that violence breeds violence. I do not apportion the blame but I would beg the English people to remember their traditions of justice and generosity and to be guided by righteousness."

### After "Exodus"

Dr. Weizmann added that he did not think the future was wholly dark, though their hearts were heavy. Everyone rose as he sent greetings to their brothers on the "Exodus," saying:

"Chazak Veematz! After Genesis there is Exodus, but later there is the Book of Numbers." (Applause.) He hoped that this present enquiry commission would be the last. It was not for him to suggest a programme, and it might yet be that all would be given another chance. "It is my earnest prayer that God may give us with this last chance the wisdom and the courage to use it aright."

Dr. Weizmann paid tribute to the historic city of Basle where the first congress had met, and expressed his gratitude to the Swiss people. He was conscious of his task—it was impos-

sible to review the past 50 years, and he was not the man to do it, being too closely involved personally.

Dr. Weizmann proceeded to sketch the main features of the past 50 years, pointing out that modern Zionism began before 1897, and he recalled Rothschild's colonisation scheme, Chovevei Zion and the Odessa Committee. What Herzl's inspired initiative and leadership had done was to begin the Zionist organisation and the diplomatic system aiming at the achievement of Zionist aspirations through the charter. The early congresses were also founded as the movement's financial instruments, but the diplomatic system was already breaking up in 1903 due to the pressure of the Russian pogroms and the enormous urge to emigrate which led to the Uganda territorialist split under Zangwill.

### Disillusioned

Disillusioned and disappointed, Herzl lived only a few months after the Uganda defeat, Wolfsohn succeeding him, aided by Nordau, Cowen and others.

The Uganda question was finally liquidated in 1905 and concentration on Palestine was renewed. In 1907 practical work began in Palestine, in contrast to the previous concentration on the Charter. Dr. Weizmann sketched the experimental work initiated and mentioned Ruppin, Volcani, Achad Haam's criticism of the Rothschild colonies, Motzkin's report on Palestine, and he recalled Baron Edmond de Rothschild saying to him: "Without me you could not have carried on, but without you my work would have been a dead thing."

Dr. Weizmann enumerated the settlements of 1908 to 1914, and the Keren Kayemeth revenue in the same period. He then dealt with the First World War, the Jewish Legion, Zionists in the United States and the efforts of Schmarya Levin and Sokolow who contacted Brandeis in 1917 and the period of Tschlenow and Ussishkin. Coming to the Balfour Declaration he reflected: "One of the main obstacles in the fulfilment of the Balfour Declaration was the destruction of Russian Jewry, which left the movement virtually leaderless. The Western communities, especially in America, were not yet prepared, and were even unconscious of their responsibility.

"The interval before their great awakening, our first great chance, slipped by for lack of support, of men and of money. How different would be the whole course of events to-day if even half of our present resources had been at our disposal in 1921."

Dr. Weizmann then reviewed the whole period since 1921, the Pinsk-

Washington struggle, the Emek purchase, the Churchill White Paper which cut off the Transjordan, the disappointments and also the progressive work, the extension of the Agency in 1929, and the "outbreak of various commissions." He recalled having diagnosed the causes operating against the Zionists—the lack of definite policy and instructions, the anti-Jewish prejudices of some British officials, the lack of understanding of the Jewish problem, the false conception of the aspirations of Zionism, and the antiquated notions of the possibilities of Palestine. The germ of all that was already discernible in 1919 and was accentuated by the Shaw Commission on displaced Arabs.

Dr. Weizmann continued his review by mentioning the 1933 German tragedy and remarking that Palestine had contributed to the rehabilitation of more refugees than any other country. He referred to Wauchope's rule, the Peel Report and the ensuing disturbances up to the 1939 White Paper "whose authors and exponents bear the most grievous responsibility for all that has happened since."

## VISIT BY DISTINGUISHED GREEK TENOR



ALEX THEOFIL

South Africa is shortly to be honoured by a visit from the distinguished Greek tenor Alex Theofil.

Alex Theofil came from a distinguished military family, his father and grandfather having been generals in the Greek army. Against the wishes of his father he followed a musical career.

After many years of study Theofil made his debut singing the great tenor role of Radames in "Aida" in Athens, and in 1932 he became the first tenor of Greece. To-day he is the "star" tenor of the Athens Opera House.

During the war years his brother, a colonel in the Greek army, was executed by the Germans.

Solly Aronowsky will present Alex Theofil and manage his South African tour. Concerts will be under the auspices of the Peloponnesian Society.

Theofil's first South African appearance will be in the City Hall, Johannesburg, on Monday September 22.

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