

# Tel-Aviv Snapshots

## Brief Notes on a Recent Visit to Palestine

by  
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I LEFT for Palestine shortly after the papers had announced in bold headlines that Arab troops were massing on the borders of the country. Everywhere in South Africa people spoke of the danger in which the Yishuv was finding itself. On landing in Tel Aviv I went out to sense the danger and to see how the people take it. I walked into a grocery store and entered into a conversation with the storekeeper. The first question is about the "danger." In Jewish fashion the storekeeper replies by asking me many questions.

"How long are you here for? On a visit or 'lehishtakea' (to settle)."

"On a short visit."

"And why not settle down here?"

"Well it's rather difficult."

Then the man whom you expect to find "in grave danger" turns upon you!

"What are you waiting there for? Don't you realise that you in the galuth are in danger? Are you waiting to have the same end as the Jews of Germany?"

WITH Mr. Dobkin, head of the organization department of the Jewish Agency, we walked out of a seaside cafe in Yarkon Street to notice Mr. Ben Gurion standing with one foot on the little bench of a shoe-black and having his boots polished. All the while he was looking out for his car which was to fetch him.

"Mr. Ben Gurion! Tell me *al regel achat* (on one foot). What shall I tell the Jews of South Africa in your name?"

He replied: "Tell them that we have three great tasks: Security, preparations of the preliminaries for the Jewish State and the immediate bringing in of 300,000 immigrants."

My attention was then distracted by a popular Tel Aviv street scene. Two British policemen with their rifles walk about escorted by an unarmed Jewish policeman. I had been told that this was the most usual form of patrolling in Tel Aviv to-day. Paradoxically, the unarmed Jewish policeman serves to protect the armed Britishers. It was the second or third time that I had noticed this.

"Does it seem to be the rule here?" I asked.

Mr. Ben Gurion made one of his peculiar gestures, waving his arm in a manner that gave a full reply. It meant to express: "There is nothing to boast about."

"TEL Aviv," remarked an acquaintance, "is so very much a miniature Jewish State, in every respect and detail, that if statehood were granted to Palestine Jewry to-morrow it would be quite a job to find a way of marking the change."

THE wags of Palestine are busy interpreting events in their own

way. What is to be the name of the Jewish State?

"Schwitzland," is the reply.

The name has many connotations. Firstly, its similarity to Switzerland also slightly partitioned. Secondly, all the cool parts of the country are in the Arab State. The Jewish territory is hot. Thirdly, the *schwitzer* is a well established humorous Jewish type.

They also say that the Jewish State would be divided into Yekestan and Frankistan. The "Frank" is a name applied to Oriental Jews. Yeke is of course the German Jew.

Speaking of the "Yeke" it is recalled that Nahariah, the smallholders settlement near Haifa is famous throughout Palestine as an exclusively German establishment. According to the UNO Commission's report, Naharia is to go to the Arab State. The "Yeke" of Nahariah had the following comment to make: Jewish State or Arab State—Nahariah bleibt immer Deutsch.

ROBERT WELTSCH, famous editor of the "Judische Rundschau," was deified throughout the Jewish world in 1933, when on the week Hitler took over he wrote his bold editorial headed "The Yellow Badge—Wear it With Pride." He was one of the few people in Germany that dared openly to defy the new Nazi rule. The editorial has since gone into a number of Anglo-Jewish anthologies as a text that made history.

Amiable, suave, gentle and very continental in his appearance, Welt-sch retains to-day his youthful dignity. Yet he is the most anti-militant Zionist that you could find. He told me in Jerusalem that he should like to see Zionists of the British Empire taking the initiative in restoring good relations between Britain and Jewry. He thought that without Britain, partition would never materialise. The others, he said, will only talk "nice words" but will do nothing. Generally, he was of the opinion that leaders who emanate from Palestine must inevitably be of a narrow outlook, and cannot see beyond their own little country. It is a misfortune, he argued, that Zionists from Britain and the Dominions follow blindly the leaders of Jerusalem. They should take the initiative. They enjoy a breadth of outlook and might have a more global approach.

I had the idea that he measured the Anglo-Jewish leaders with the yardstick of the pre-war German Jewish Zionist. As a visionary he probably hoped to find amongst us Nordaus and Herzls.

ROYAL wedding stories are good news in Palestine as elsewhere. The newspapers made much of a story about a wedding cake for Princess Elizabeth that was flown by air to England from Australia and got damaged on the way. It was stopped

at Lydda and taken post-haste to a Jewish confectioner in Tel Aviv who restored the cake to its proper glory.

The newspaper report also says a Jerusalem engineer was employed to help the confectioner into putting the cake into proper shape. Perhaps they meant an architect.

PNINA SALTZMAN is as popular as ever with musical audiences in Tel Aviv. She was given a rousing ovation when she played with the Palestine Orchestra and the hall was crowded. Her husband is Mr. Weissmann, member of a well-known Cairo Jewish family.

Her mother, who is known to many in Johannesburg, told me that compared with the Australian Jews your South African Jews are Hebrew scholars, Landonim and Tzadickim.

While touring Australia Pnina Saltzman was booked to participate in a Simchas Torah celebration of a provincial town. She could not keep the date however and wired accordingly, whereupon the heads of the community postponed the Simchas Torah for a week later. The whole synagogue ceremony took place seven days after the appointed proper date and it was followed by a musical recital given by Pnina.

"This could never happen in South Africa," Mrs. Saltzman insisted.

### PORT ELIZABETH J.N.F. FORTNIGHT

December 14—December 23

The Port Elizabeth Women's Zionist League are busy planning an intensive programme for the Port Elizabeth Jewish National Fund Fort-night, which will be inaugurated on December 14. Miss Marcia Gitlin has consented to perform the official opening.

### JWA CLOTHING DRIVE

Although the JWA Annual Clothing Drive took place last March, so many urgent calls for further supplies have been received from the camps in Europe that the S.A. Jewish War Appeal has decided to arrange a similar house to house collection throughout the Union for Sunday, November 30.

The winter in Europe is a severe one, and it depends solely upon the assistance that will be given by the more fortunately placed communities whether the Jews in Europe will be adequately clothed. Men's women's children's and babies' garments, undergarments, shoes, blankets, linens, etc., in good clean condition, are urgently required. The JWA makes a special appeal to all residents to search their wardrobes before going on holiday and to donate everything that they possibly can to this Cause.

The Clothing Drive committee also asks for assistance from members of the community for workers, cars, vans, etc., for the Drive on Sunday, November 30. Will all those willing to co-operate in this connection please phone 22-4403, extension 7.

### S.A. ZIONIST SOCIALIST PARTY

Mr. L. Tager, who has recently returned from a short visit to Palestine, will address a public meeting, which has been organised by the Doornfontein Branch of the Zionist Socialist Party, at 8 p.m. on Sunday, November 23, at the Talmud Torah Hall, Doornfontein.

### RABBI WEILER TO PREACH ON ORT-OZE

At the Sabbath evening service in the Temple Israel on Friday, November 14, Rabbi Dr. M. C. Weiler will deliver a sermon on "The Ort-Oze and its place in the community." Rabbi Weiler will deal, in particular, with the work of the Vocational Guidance Bureau, which is now preparing for the school leaving period.

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