

Zionist Record

The Organ of South African Jewry

"Zionism aims to establish a publicly-assured, legally secured Home for the Jewish people in Palestine."
—Basle Programme.

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The Actions Committee

THE deliberations of the Zionist Actions Committee have now concluded, and a decision has been taken to convene the Zionist Congress in June, 1949. By that time it will be possible to know whether the demarcation of the respective provinces of the Jewish Agency and the Israeli Government are workable or not.

In our editorial last week we made the point that time alone will decide the exact "boundaries" between the Zionist movement and the State of Israel. This becomes even more evident on reading the reports of the Actions Committee meeting. Most of the activities which have now been allotted to the Zionist Organisation are self-evident. They are tied up with work in the Diaspora, and it must be obvious that the State of Israel will not and cannot undertake tasks outside its own borders. As for the debatable questions, such as the maintenance of political departments by the Jewish Agency in some of the world's leading capitals, no ready-made formula will settle them. We do not know to-day the kind of situation that may arise in the political life of Zionism within a month, or even a week. Even if it were decided to abolish the political offices in New York, it might be necessary to re-establish them again under the stress of some emergency.

A separation between the Agency and the Government of Israel had to be carried out, and a resolution to this effect was adopted. The main problem that will now arise is how to avoid any overlap between the two. Even while the Zionist Organisation was the only Zionist body in existence it was generally felt that there was frequent duplication of activity by various departments. Mr. Kaplan's plan to merge the various funds was the result of much practical experience. Although it has not yet been adopted, the plan will ultimately triumph.

In the field of enlightenment, propaganda and publicity each Zionist fund was obliged to maintain its own machinery, resulting in wasteful efforts. The task of consolidating the State of Israel and of bringing in hundreds of thousands of people is so urgent and so gigantic that it will hardly lend itself to division into different compartments and departments. We note, for example, the use in a separate context of the words "care of immigrants," "colonisation of immigrants" and "immigration." How will it be possible to decide where the one ends and the other begins? This may well apply to the funds, too. Traditionally the Keren Kayemeth acquires the land and the Keren Hayesod provides the means for the colonisation. This distinction had to be abandoned even before the State of Israel was created. The urgent need for settlement in the Negev brought the Keren Kayemeth into the orbit of colonisation.

As for the campaign, it is a fact that in all our leading centres—America, England, South Africa and Canada—the funds were obliged to amalgamate. It is doubtful whether there will be any separation in the future. Under the circumstances the existence of separate funds in Israel will be somewhat artificial.

These are only some of the queries that come to mind on reading of the Actions Committee's decisions. Experience, force of circumstances and mature consideration will no doubt bring about many changes and modifications. In the meantime, we should all mainly concern ourselves not so much with the prerogatives of the two bodies (the State and the Organisation) but with the tasks themselves. The Zionist Organisation might have been deprived of some of its "rights," but as regards its mission the movement has to-day a programme of work which is a thousand times bigger than any it had faced before. The stature of Zionism will not be diminished by the fact that the Organisation may in due course have to give up politics altogether. On the contrary, as soon as we are spared the enormous efforts required, in the past, to further the political aims of Zionism we shall the better be able to devote ourselves to the great constructive mission of the movement: to the building of Israel, the revival of the Jewish people and its spiritual revitalisation.

Arieh Birnbaum

JEWISH education in South Africa has suffered a grave loss through the premature death of Dr. Arieh Birnbaum. With the present shortage of manpower in the educational field, it will be hardly possible to replace him. He belonged to a great generation of Galician Maskilim, combining a deep knowledge of Jewish learning with modern education. During his stay in South Africa he had helped to build up the system of Hebrew education in the Cape, which is generally regarded as the best in the country and probably one of the best in the English-speaking world.

Dr. Birnbaum did not confine his activities to the educational sphere. He was a tower of strength to the Zionist movement of this country, and his influence was deeply felt in every aspect of Zionist work in the Western Province.

Zichrono Livracha!

Experts Predicted That Would Be Bankrupt A Few Weeks

TEL AVIV, Tuesday.—"The financial and economic adequacy of Israel has been soundly established," said Mr. Eliezer Kaplan, Minister of Finance, in his address to the Actions Committee.

He said that a "neutral expert" had given the opinion a few months ago that the Yishuv would not be able to carry on for more than a few weeks after the British withdrawal and would be completely bankrupt.

However, despite the fact that the State had been faced with a complete breakdown in the various ser-

vices it had managed financial soundness.

The Yishuv had not any lease-lend assistance mobilisation of manpower resources set a world capita contribution to the State of Israel was for the extra and enormous war. The people resented taxation to the hilt and that the struggle was vital.

Dealing with the financial needs of Israel, Mr. Kaplan said the Zionist organisation had the task of clearing the British of Europe and bringing to Israel.

Although Israel would international loan, Mr. Kaplan, it would be dependent on that only.

NEW PROGRESSIVE PARTY FORMED

TEL AVIV, Monday.—A moderate progressive party comprising Aliyah Hadasha, General Zionist Labour (Oved Zioni) and a section of the left-wing General Zionists, which broke away from the party some time ago, was officially established in Tel Aviv on Sunday night.

It is not yet known whether Mr. Gruenbaum, the Israeli Minister of the Interior, will join the party.

BEECHAM CONCERTS

Ever since the visit of Sir Thomas Beecham to South Africa was first announced, local concert-goers have been carefully hoarding their unstinted approbation for his opening concert. Sir Thomas was coming armed with a mighty reputation, and we would have to live up to it. "What a difference a single man can make," was to be the keynote of the response. Out with the fur coats, and off to listen. And while the public clambered into its gala array, Sir Thomas doffed his press and radio personality and put on his working clothes, complete with tails.

The programme at the first concert included the Sibelius First Symphony, which abounds in contrasts of mood and variety of orchestral colour. There are moments of disturbing wildness in the symphony, which merge into mellow romantic song, and throughout the four movements Sir Thomas achieved the maximum qualities of tenderness and vigour from the orchestra. At times he could be clearly heard coaxing and persuading the instrumentalists, and judging from the effect his words were far from wasted.

In Beethoven's Eroica, which was played at the concert at the Colosseum, the Orchestra achieved a remarkable degree of co-ordination in the passages of hope and tragic grandeur which lead up to the breathless intensity of the Finale. There was a strict observance of detail which was not, however, allowed to obscure the broader aspect of the work.

Sir Thomas has satisfied the greatest expectations of the public and has shown that merit in conducting has nothing to do with flamboyance or unorthodox interpretation. Nevertheless, we should remember that he only wields a baton and not a wand, and that the ability of the orchestra does, even if only slightly, affect the standard of a particular performance.

TRANSFER OF INSTITUTIONS

Report by Rabbi

TEL AVIV, Wednesday.—Dr. M. C. Weiler, who has disclosed that he has been worked out for the Ma Israel 34,000 student-loyalty trained in 1,000 trade that tional courses maintained because ORT in Europe. The While be transferred together inscribed tire equipment of the in the at 1,000,000 pounds. he has at lar

QUEEN WILHELMINA

JUBILEE

Sermon at Great

On Friday, September 3, Rabbi Dr. L. Rabbinowitz will give his sermon to the occasion of the accession to the throne of Queen Juliana. All Netherlands and those with a Holland are cordially invited to attend the service. The Consul, Dr. van Hattum, sent.

Mrs. Leah Abrahamson (Bulawayo)

The Bulawayo community suffered a sad loss in the passing of Mrs. Leah Abrahamson, one of its best known and respected members. Born in Bialystok, Poland, daughter of Eliezer and Evens achowitz, she arrived in Bulawayo in 1921. Leah Abrahamson was an ardent and hospitable, and the porter of all Jewish German causes.

She is survived by Mr. Morris Abrahamson, who has been President of the community for many years, Mrs. Rina Reiff, and Mrs. Abe Abrahamson, who is in communal and Zionist work. One surviving brother, Mr. Jacob Bejrachowicz, a prominent Zionist leader in present-day South Africa.

Gramophone Record

A Gramophone Record will be held at the Jewish O'Reilly Road, Berea, Johannesburg, on September 5, at 8 p.m.

The programme includes plays by the N.B.C., and other interesting recordings.